

**Barnard Academy
Alternative Governance Structure
Proposal**

For Review by the Vermont State Board of Education,
December 2017

PRESENTED BY:

Board of Directors, Barnard Academy

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Barnard Academy Alternative Structure Committee

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

VISION	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
ELIGIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROPOSAL...SECTION 9, ACT 46	9
BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT BARNARD & BARNARD ACADEMY	10
GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION IN RELATION TO...NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS	11
SECTION I: Barnard's Act 46 Process 2015-Present	13
SECTION II: Meeting Act 46 Goals	23
SECTION III: Financial Analysis of Alternative Governance Structure	32
SECTION IV: Appendices	38
APPENDIX A – Our Decision-Making Process	38
APPENDIX B – Student Enrollment and Population Data	60
APPENDIX C – School Learning Environment	65
APPENDIX D – Staffing and Staff Support	84
APPENDIX E – Student Results	91
APPENDIX F – Financial Information and Projections	93
APPENDIX G - Efficiency and Sustainability	97
APPENDIX H - Statistical Data About the Community	98
APPENDIX I - Alternative Governance Structure Action Plan	99
APPENDIX J - WCSU Act 46 Study Committee Final Report, January 18, 2017	104

VISION

The Mission of Barnard Academy is to create a safe and supportive environment where all children are expected to achieve their fullest potential, communicate effectively, reason critically, think creatively, work cooperatively, value differences in others, and become positive, concerned and informed global citizens.

The Vision set forth in this proposal is to secure the commitment made by Barnard taxpayers to support the strongest start for our children through the provision of fully-funded, full-day Preschool opportunities; to secure the budgetary agility necessary for fiscally responsible innovation around outdoor and inquiry-based learning opportunities; and to solidify accountability to our community by maintaining a strong local voice in school decision-making.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After thorough investigation of available options (see Figure 1: *Act 46 and Barnard: How We Got Here* below and Appendix A: *Our Decision-Making Process*), Barnard Academy intends to remain an independently-governed school district within the Windsor Central Supervisory Union (WCSU) for grades PreK-6 and to continue our long-standing Middle School/High School union for grades 7-12 at Woodstock Union Middle School/High School. As an independently governed PreK-6 school, we propose to be a Non-Member Elementary District (NMED) within the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union (WCMUUSD), as well as a member district within that body for grades 7-12. This proposed structure, to be effective July 1, 2018, follows the guidelines set forth in Act 46, Section 9, and meets all criteria of Act 46. This proposal is based on over two years of study, discussion and activity. The Barnard School Board approved the creation of this plan at its meeting on September 25, 2017, and the majority of the electorate of Barnard, Vermont support independent governance (Appendix A.i. *Survey*). Per Act 49, Section 8; this proposal must be measured by the same standards as a preferred merger model proposal¹. Per Act 49, Section 10, Barnard School Board members, school families, and/or townspeople will take the opportunity “to add to or otherwise amend their proposal in connection with the Secretary’s consideration of the proposal and conversations with the district or districts under subsection (a) of this section, and in connection with testimony presented to the State Board under subsection (b) of this section.”²

This proposal is based on the wishes of Barnard taxpayers alongside the strengths of Barnard Academy and the burgeoning community of Barnard. Contrary to many communities in the State, both our town and school are thriving which can be seen in both population (Appendix H.i. *Census*) and enrollment data (Appendix B.i. *Enrollment, ADM, & Phantom Pupils*). We presently have steady-to-increasing enrollment, higher student-to-teacher ratios than other schools in our region and the state average, and our per-pupil spending is the second lowest in our supervisory union (Appendix F.ii. *Total Educational Spending per Equalized Pupil*). We attribute these positive trends to the engagement and support of our community, and to the flexibility afforded by our current system of governance. This system allows us to forge operational efficiencies within the school and with our supervisory union partners while maintaining independence from plans that would work against the educational and fiscal goals we share with Act 46.

This proposal follows a 706b process with other members of the WCSU which did not lead to an outcome that would meet the goals of Act 46 for Barnard students. The State-approved merger

¹ "Evaluation by the State Board of Education" section 20, 2015 Acts & Resolves No. 46, Section 8 is amended to read; '(c) The State Board may adopt rules designed to assist districts submitting Alternative Structure Proposals but shall not by rule or otherwise impose more stringent requirements than those of this Act,'"

² Act 49, Sec. 10. TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES; PROPOSAL; FINAL PLAN * * * (c) Process

plan would in fact decrease the educational opportunities for Barnard students³ while providing no long-term tax relief (SECTION III: Financial Analysis of Alternative Governance Structure). We provide an excellent, innovative learning environment and can continue to best provide opportunities for our students for grades PreK-6 by operating as a Non-Member Elementary District within the WCSU.

WCSU is currently comprised of two districts: the WCMUUSD -- Bridgewater, Plymouth, Pomfret, Killington, Reading, and Woodstock as a unified district -- and the Barnard School District. Pittsfield is submitting a proposal to the State to join in a side-by-side arrangement with the WCMUUSD under a 3X1 exemption within Act 49. If Pittsfield's proposal is accepted, the outcome will be three entities within WCSU. If not, the outcome will be two entities within WCSU. We argue that our plan will create the smallest number of districts *practicable* within our region at this time because, as we will detail, the Articles of Agreement in the 2017 WCSU Act 46 Study Committee (Study Committee) Final Plan ("Study Committee Plan" or "Merger Plan") which form the basis of the WCMUUSD Board's work, undermine our district's and the WCSU's ability to best meet the goals of Act 46.

Our proposal's rationale is grounded in four primary arguments that address equity, excellence, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility:

1. Barnard Academy's Preschool Program leads the commitment to **Equity** in Early Education within our supervisory union, and Board independence is required at this time to sustain it. Our full-time public preschool program will be in jeopardy in a merger with WCMUUSD.

Barnard has led the way within our SU to offer preschoolers educational opportunities *beyond* what is required by law, and has done so while remaining fiscally responsible. Our prequalified, fully-funded PreK offering—up to 35 hours for four-year-olds, and up to 21 hours for three-year-olds—demonstrates our strong commitment to, and alignment with early education goals put forward by the State, which have documented impacts for student performance in later years. This four-star STARS-rated program⁴ is at risk in the current merger plan. While our taxpayers demonstrated this commitment nine years ago, no other district in the SU currently demonstrates this strong commitment to their preschoolers. Further, WCSU Superintendent Mary Beth Banios has recommended—and received WCMUUSD Board support for—incorporating in-house PreK

³ While Act 49 includes a slew of possible reasons a regional merger may not be the best route to achieving the Goals of Act 46#, a merger plan that would lead to a decrease in educational opportunities is not among the possible reasons listed. However, this is precisely the regional political context we find ourselves in. Act 49. Section 1.(e): "Significant areas of the State, however, have experienced difficulty satisfying the goals of Act 46. The range of complications is varied, including operating or tuitioning models that differ among adjoining districts, geographic isolation due to lengthy driving times or inhospitable travel routes between proposed merger partners, and greatly differing levels of debt per equalized pupil between districts involved in merger study committees."

⁴ The fifth star will be achieved soon when we are able to fully enclose our preK playground.

programs where possible, but at level-funding. On December 11, 2017, Banios recommended tuitioning PreK beyond the state-mandated 10 hours, and the MUUSD Board has signaled support thus far. However, there is incontrovertible evidence that early education is educationally valuable and has a huge impact on children's entire schooling. This is especially true for economically disadvantaged kids. A stronger start will have a positive effect on individual children's education, and on the overall quality of our schools at every grade level. Our stronger commitment to full-time, publicly funded early education will be in peril if we are consolidated with WCMUUSD in the State Plan. And significantly, we are concerned that WCMUUSD's consolidation proposal would lead to the unsustainability of our whole school over time (see Section II for further argument) which would further reduce our ability to serve the needs of working families and the State's most vulnerable children.

2. Barnard Academy's current commitment to innovation in learning continues our historical record of **Excellence** in education, and a strong PreK-6 structure with Board independence is paramount at this time for continued success.

Barnard Academy is poised to be a leader within our supervisory union for innovation in learning. Our high-quality preschool program is serving as a model for the supervisory union as they consider expanding their offerings in unified district elementary buildings. Our Place-Based Learning initiative, coupled with the expansion of our Outdoor Classroom combines hands-on learning environments with an inquiry-based curriculum that can incorporate STEAM material in ways that support all learners. Our combined classrooms and teacher collaboration implement flexible groupings that facilitate personalized learning and flexible pathways. New Principal Hannah Thein is part of the WCSU Innovation Team which, along with a new superintendent, is opening doors for increasing educational quality within our supervisory union. Barnard taxpayers' 'No' vote on the Study Committee Plan which would have undercut our school, shows its commitment to the strength of our community school, its current successes, and its potential for growth and educational leadership within the supervisory union.

3. Steady enrollment numbers and lower per pupil costs speak to the importance of sustaining Barnard Academy and our ability to deliver on Act 46 goals independently to achieve the greatest **Operational Efficiency** for our supervisory union.

Contrary to trends around the State and our supervisory union, Barnard Academy has seen steady-to-rising enrollment for the past ten years. In this year alone, Barnard enrollment is up over 10% (Appendix B.i. *Enrollment, ADM, and Phantom Pupils* and Appendix B. Table B.1. *Barnard Academy Enrollment 2007-2017*). Furthermore, per-pupil spending in Barnard has been second lowest in the SU in recent years (Appendix F.ii. *Total Educational Spending per Equalized Pupil*), as our student-to-teacher ratio has been the highest in the SU, achieved in part by combining grades in classrooms with low enrollments. Undercutting a school and a

community that is thriving, per the Study Committee Plan, would likely affect the SU enrollment patterns negatively.⁵

4. Maintaining School Board responsiveness and agility is the best means to achieve **Fiscal Responsibility** for our district.

At a small school, flexibility and creativity are paramount to administering the budget in an efficient way while still achieving the quality and breadth of student opportunities that our young children deserve. Maintaining an independent 3-member School Board, working together with the community and school administration, is currently the best way to protect the level of efficacy required to deliver high quality education at a price taxpayers value. In addition, as the Barnard Academy School Board continues efforts to achieve low-cost solutions to programmatic and infrastructure needs, it will act as a point of comparison for the budgetary decisions of the new WCMUUSD.

The Secretary of Education has recently expressed concern about small town schools, believing they are expensive, have volatile tax rates and programming is limited⁶. Barnard Academy demonstrates that this is not always the case. Our spending, our tax rates, and tax rate volatility are in line with many other districts including many with large enrollments⁷. The educational opportunities and programming that we offer students are not more limited than our neighbors, including our largest neighbor. Barnard Academy offers students an excellent and distinctive educational experience that has proven success at no higher cost than our closest larger neighbor. The excellence of our school continues to draw new families into the area, as evidenced by recent increases in our enrollment. Remaining independent will allow Barnard to best serve our

⁵ In recent years, Barnard has seen an influx of new families and a steady-to-increasing enrollment in Barnard Academy, bucking statewide trends. One explanation of this trend is Barnard's strong community values and local ties, evidenced by multiple non-profit arts and community service organizations, a strong grassroots agricultural movement, and several historical and preservation groups all committed to strengthening multi-generational community relationships and bringing authentic cultural opportunities to Barnard residents and beyond (see our town's web site www.communityofbarnard.org for a list of organizations and events). For a town of only about a thousand residents, there is a vitality that is palpable to visitors and attractive to families looking to settle in Vermont to raise their children with just those values. By maintaining a strong, independent elementary school that is grounded in this rural Vermont culture, we seek to sustain this model of community life that provides a choice of something truly different from mainstream American culture, and that has shown itself to be just what many families are seeking for themselves and their children.

⁶ "UPDATED: Education Board sharpens scrutiny of school merger proposals," Tiffany Danitz Pache, *Vermont Digger*, October 1, 2017. <https://vtdigger.org/2017/10/01/education-board-sharpens-scrutiny-of-school-merger-proposals/>

⁷ South Burlington had 2,420.12 K-12 equalized pupils in 2017 and per-pupil cost of \$15052.93. Springfield had 1,325.17 K-12 equalized pupils in 2017 and per-pupil cost of \$16229.69. Surveying more similarly structured schools (elementary schools that send to union MS/HS); in 2017, East Montpelier had 183.93 equalized pupils in elementary school at \$19,856.11 per- equalized-pupil cost; Rockingham had 538.07 equalized pupils in elementary school at \$16,362.02 per- equalized-pupil cost; and Norwich—exempt from Act 46—had 611.84 equalized pupils at a \$17,746.28 per- equalized-pupil cost. In the same year, Barnard's per-pupil cost was \$14,986.13. (Source: AOE Ed Data Per-Pupil Spending FY2017.) Even if our Small Schools Grant is excluded from the calculation, we come in lower than many schools, some with larger enrollments (This grant currently equals approximately \$1000.00 per student).

students with our strong programming, and to best serve the region and State by allowing Barnard to continue its pattern of growth by appealing to families.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROPOSAL UNDER SECTION 9 OF ACT 46

This proposal is made with the understanding that it meets the requirements for such a governance structure as described in Section 5 of Act 46, as amended by Act 49, Section 5; and in Section 9 of Act 46.

Act 49, Section 5 amends Act 46 Section 5, and offers guidelines that state that a supervisory union composed of multiple member districts, each with its separate school board, *may* meet the State's goals, particularly if: (1) the member districts consider themselves to be collectively responsible for the education of all prekindergarten through grade 12 students residing in the supervisory union; (2) the supervisory union operates in a manner that complies with its obligations under 16 V.S.A. § 261a and that maximizes efficiencies through economies of scale and the flexible management, transfer, and sharing of nonfinancial resources among the member districts, which may include a common personnel system, with the goal of increasing the ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff; (3) the supervisory union has the smallest number of member school districts practicable, achieved wherever possible by the merger of districts with similar operating and tuitioning patterns; and (4) the supervisory union has the smallest number of member school districts practicable after consideration of greatly differing levels of indebtedness among the member districts; and (5) the combined average daily membership of all member districts is not less than 900.

With 1000 students enrolled in the WCSU in the 2017-18 school year⁸ (Appendix B.iii. *Enrollment at WCSU for 5 Years*), the member districts in the supervisory union meet the guidelines of points 1, 2, and 5. Point 4 is not applicable to the conditions within our region. Regarding point 3, we will demonstrate that a smaller number of districts is not practicable under the merging conditions set forth by potential partners.

Barnard Academy performed all of the requirements set forth in Section 9. We conducted a (1) **Self-Evaluation** by evaluating our current ability to meet or exceed each of the goals set forth in Sec. 2 of Act 46 (Appendices A - F); we have engaged in (2) **Meetings** with the boards of surrounding districts to discuss ways to promote improvement in the region in connection with these goals (Appendix A.iii. *Committee/Board Meeting Dates* and Appendix A.iv. *Communication with Other SU Districts*); and we have developed and here submit a (3) **Proposal** to retain our current governance structure, demonstrating our district's ability to meet or exceed the goals of Act 46 and detailing an Action Plan (Appendix I: *Alternative Governance Structure Action Plan*) to continue to improve our performance in connection with these goals.

⁸ ADMs for current year have not been published at this time. In 2016-17, WCSU towns had 847 ADM, a figure that does not include a substantial number--approximately 150--of tuitioned choice students.

BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT BARNARD & BARNARD ACADEMY

Barnard is collectively responsible for PreK-12 education. Barnard Academy is a small, high-quality school that serves grades PreK-6 in the Windsor Central Supervisory Union. Barnard students attend Woodstock Union Middle School and High School for grades 7-12. This Union Middle School/High School partnership has been in effect since the 1960s.

Barnard Academy is located in a vibrant community that has seen population growth for decades (Appendix H: *Statistical Data*), has a strong social fabric and rich cultural vitality⁹, and last year received Village Center Designation, further supporting local efforts towards growth. This vibrancy is reflected in the steady-to-increasing enrollment over the past decade, and the school's quality is demonstrated by the proficiency-levels and achievements of the students, by the long-serving commitment of experienced teachers and staff, by the ongoing success of students as they progress into adulthood and by the strong integration of the school into the larger community. The school has a record of commitment to educational equity as our proposal will outline. The school and town have a documented commitment to transparency, accountability and fiscal responsibility. The taxpayers approve our budgets, after involved discussion, every year.

Barnard is Geographically Isolated. At a higher elevation than neighboring towns within our SU, travel to and from Barnard is seasonally inhospitable. There are two main arteries that go to Woodstock and Pomfret respectively; Route 12 to Woodstock and Stage Road to Pomfret. As detailed in the section GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION IN RELATION TO SMALL SCHOOLS GRANT AND BUSSING ELEMENTARY STUDENTS TO NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS below, both of these roads have weather-related challenges that increase travel times and hazard level, and that we believe are not appropriate for young children.

⁹ Barnard resident Linda Treash testimony at March 21, 2017 Board of Education meeting for Rule 3400: "Barnard Academy is a thriving, successful school which is highly supported by our community. The local doctor comes in and does Chess Club after school. Two town non-profits came together to arrange with the VT Arts Council for a poet to come and do a special 6-week Artist-in-Residence at our school (which started actually today). Our town is attractive to young families because, despite only having 900-1000 residents, we have an active and progressive CSA farming community with a weekly farmers market, we have a small arts non-profit, a volunteer neighbors helping hand group and most importantly, an excellent, community-supported small school. Within our SU we have the highest student-teacher ratio, and we are middle of the group for per-pupil spending, which is near the State average (Appendix F.ii. *Total Equalized Spending per Equalized Pupil*). Our local school board has worked hard to keep costs down over the past years, and their efforts reflect the mixture of old-time Vermont families and new families in this small but engaged and beautiful town."

GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION IN RELATION TO SMALL SCHOOLS GRANT AND BUSSING ELEMENTARY STUDENTS TO NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS

Geographic Isolation (GI) status is not a prerequisite for this proposal. However, GI is a factor in our proposal in two ways. First, road and weather conditions ought to be considered in the development of complete metrics for Geographic Isolation as it relates to Small Schools Grant retention, such that Barnard Academy would justifiably retain GI status. Second, the considerations that speak to our geographic isolation factor into our current barriers to merger.

Barnard Academy is located on Route 12 in Barnard Village. The town is 1,366' above sea level, making it the sixth highest town by elevation in the state. The closest school that may have capacity¹⁰ is Woodstock Elementary School (WES). Door-to-door with no pick-ups, WES is a 15-minute drive in good weather, 10.3 miles away via Route 12, a 50 MPH state route. However, at a 1000' higher elevation than Woodstock, Barnard is known for having treacherous roads in the winter. The route to Woodstock passes through an area of Route 12 called "The Ledges," a steep and winding stretch of road that is often very icy in winter and requires very slow travel. This road has a 7/32% grade. Safe travel times between Barnard and Woodstock are almost always increased, sometimes dramatically. Most winter nights Barnard gets "nuisance" snow dustings which require slower speeds in the mornings, December to March. Such topography, weather patterns, and road conditions must be considered to attain fairness in the development of metrics for GI across Vermont.

Barnard's geographic isolation underscores the importance of maintaining reliable, high quality early education within our community school. If Barnard Academy's preschool program were to be reduced or eliminated within a merged district configuration (see Section II), the ability to adequately to serve the developmental needs of our preschoolers, as advocated by Governor Scott and child education and development experts, would be uncertain. Safety concerns around bussing 3- and 4-year-olds are justifiably strong. Barnard Academy procedures dictate that 3-year-olds are not allowed to travel by bus and 4-year-olds must wear seatbelts. Per WCSU policy, safe bus transportation is contingent on considerations of the "age, behavior, and physical condition of the child"¹¹. Beyond safety issues, it is a significant burden on families to transport preschoolers more than 15 minutes--possibly double that in winter--to Woodstock programs, and the likelihood that these children would have access to the publicly funded, quality educational services they currently receive is minimal.

The State already deemed Barnard Academy as Geographically Isolated in 2011 as a result of the language found in Section 21 of Act 153 of the 2009 "Session Study on Small School Grant Eligibility Due to Geographic Necessity". As our School Board wrote to the State Board of

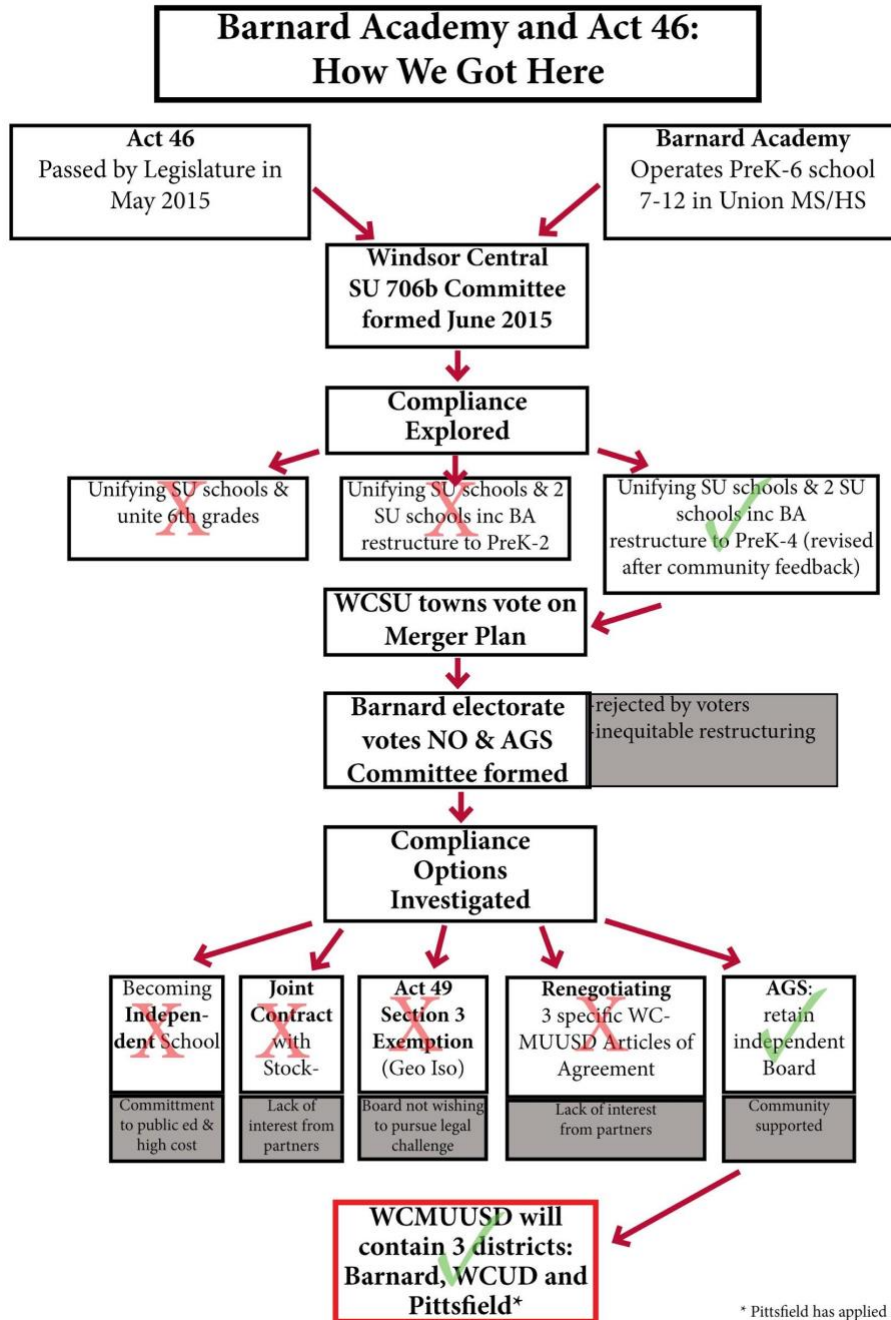
¹⁰ Woodstock Elementary is currently expanding their PreK program, and it is not clear if they will have capacity.

¹¹ Windsor Central Supervisory Union Policy, Code C3 - Bus Transportation, Guidelines I. Eligible Riders, C.3

Education on September 26, 2017 (Appendix A. *Communication with State Board of Education regarding Geographic Isolation*), we are aware that the metrics that define Geographic Isolation are changing in 2018, but the considerations that determined Barnard Academy as Geographically Isolated in 2011 have not changed (distance, topography). We argue that there is no legitimate reason that Barnard should be removed from the prior list. If necessary, Barnard will continue efforts to protect its elementary age children from perilous travel conditions and long travel times that negatively affect educational outcomes.

SECTION I: Barnard's Act 46 Process 2015-Present

Figure 1: Act 46 and Barnard: How We Got Here:



A. Overview of Region and Process

Shortly after Act 46 was passed, Windsor Central District Boards--Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Pomfret, Reading, and Woodstock--signed on to a 706b committee through a largely unreflective process that did not adequately explore alternative options (Appendix A.iii.a. *Act 46 Task Force Meeting Dates* and Appendix A.iii.b. *Act 46 Study Committee Meeting Dates*). The Barnard voters were ill-informed of these developments and did not participate in the decision to participate in the 706b committee. The 706b process itself was not appropriately fair or objective and led to a flawed merger proposal that Barnard voters rejected.

Our proposal highlights the weaknesses of the WCSU Study Committee Plan we rejected with respect to Barnard Academy and Act 46 goals. Our proposal documents our attempts to create more equitable merger terms before the merger vote, and our outreach after the vote to try to renegotiate Articles of Agreement that we and our voters felt were unfair to our students and harmful to our town. Based on this recent history of failed negotiation in these matters, and on the past and current plans of the Study Committee and WCMUUSD Board respectively, it is clear that a state-forced merger of Barnard Academy with the WCMUUSD will affect a reduction of services for our students. It is significant to note that whether merging governance or not, our school will continue to enjoy the expanded educational opportunities and economies of scale afforded by our current management relationships and shared resources within our supervisory union and will also continue to work with other districts within the SU to explore further ways to expand these.

Neighboring districts that are a part of this proposal process, through conversations, established relationships, and identified and established economies of scale: Pomfret, Woodstock, Bridgewater, Reading, Killington, Plymouth, Pittsfield, Stockbridge, and West Windsor.

B. Chronology of Process

i. Pre-WCSU Merger Vote (June 2015-March 2017)

Since Act 46 became law, Barnard residents and representatives have actively pursued the question of which form of governance will best serve the education of our children and the fiscal concerns of our taxpayers. This process included eighteen months on a Superintendent-appointed exploratory committee and a formal 706b committee (“Act 46 Study Committee”), the creation of a Town of Barnard Act 46 Forum Committee, and the Board creation of an Alternative Governance Structure (AGS) Committee and accompanying website. After the 706b committee dissolved, the AGS Committee conducted a survey of town residents regarding education and merger preferences.

As a member of a 706b committee, Barnard School Board School Board members and Act 46 Study Committee representatives appointed by the Superintendent worked with representatives

from the following districts of Windsor Central: Pomfret, Woodstock, Bridgewater, Reading, and Killington. That committee ultimately put forward a merger plan—WCSU Act 46 Study Committee Final Report, January 18, 2017 (Appendix J: *WCSU Act 46 Study Committee Final Report, January 18, 2017*)—that proposed unification of the districts in the SU. This plan was approved by the State in January 2017 and presented to voters on March 7, 2017. Voters in Barnard and Reading voted against joining the Unified District, and since the Study Committee had made every town “advisable,” a Modified Unified Union (MUUSD) was formed. The Act 46 Study Committee’s designation of Barnard as advisable demonstrates that they did not see Barnard Academy’s participation in the unified district as essential to the educational vision of the region. The State Board of Education’s acceptance of their plan reinforces our view that Barnard’s integration into the newly merged district should not be the measure of Barnard Academy’s contribution to meeting Act 46 goals in the region¹². Reading subsequently had two re-votes, ultimately voting to join the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District (WCMUUSD). Barnard remains independent and our citizens support the creation of this AGS proposal (Appendix A.i. *Survey* and Appendix A.iii *Committee/Board Meeting Dates*).

The central issues regarding the 706b Study Committee process and reasons for Barnard’s “No” vote on Town Meeting Day appear below. Barnard representation on the committee was compromised throughout the merger plan’s development, and misinformation guided crucial decision-making and voting later in the process. Furthermore, Barnard community members did not have adequate opportunity to participate in the process because of the lack of efforts to achieve effective public engagement. This flawed process, led, inevitably, to a flawed proposal. Since continued attempts to negotiate a better Plan have failed, Barnard citizens propose to maintain our strong school as an independent entity that continues to work within the WCSU and with the WCMUUSD towards educational and financial goals that benefit students and taxpayers in the region.

a. Inconsistent Representation on 706b Committee

Shortly after Act 46 became law, Windsor Central Superintendent Alice Worth created an Exploratory Committee, followed by a 706b Study Committee. Three Barnard School Board members were on these committees at different times. But while Barnard Board members were a part of these conversations, at least five meetings were missed during a crucial four-month decision-making period. There was no Barnard representative present at the following 2016 meetings: 2/3; 3/10, 4/27, 5/23, or 6/2; and attendance was not taken or noted in minutes at the 2/22 meeting. (Appendix A.iii. *Committee/Board Meeting Dates*, with link to minutes). With no Barnard Representative at such important meetings, the Committee’s notion that Barnard was a shrinking town with a shrinking school seems to have gone unchallenged while the restructuring plan was developed.

¹² Since the majority of potential regional partners are housed within the same SU, in this case “region” refers to both schools within the SU and a “common-sense” understanding of the term.

b. Lack of Engagement of Barnard Community

While other town representatives brought the developing merger plan to their constituents at respective 2016 Town Meeting Day meetings and asked for feedback, Barnard voters were not afforded this opportunity. No presentation or discussion of Act 46 occurred at Barnard's Town Meeting Day in Barnard in 2016. In fact, Barnard residents were largely absent from the conversation until the Fall of 2016 when plans to restructure their school had already been made. The WCSU Act 46 Study Committee did not engage Barnard residents during the first year of their discussions, giving presentations to inform Barnard townspeople of the merger plan first on July 18, 2016 and then on October 26, 2016. The announcement for the mid-summer July 2016 public presentation did not make clear that a plan was being proposed to remove grades 3-6 from Barnard Academy, noting only possible "administrative changes" and asking residents to come hear about "the potential educational opportunities and inherent challenges in restructuring of school management" [Appendix A.iv. *E-mail Announcements (with Flyers)*]. The flyer for the October 26, 2016 Study Committee presentation to Barnard made some of the merger committee ideas -- including the possible "closing of some grades in some schools by July 2018" -- clear for the first time [Appendix A.iv. *E-mail Announcements (with Flyers)*].

At the October 26, 2016 meeting (Appendix A.vii. *Community Outreach*), the Study Committee's merger plan was outlined with specificity¹³. The WCSU plan at that point involved the elimination of grades 3-6 in Barnard and Reading in order to increase funding for equalized Unified Arts hours at each school. At this time, several Barnard residents mobilized in opposition to this merger plan, upset that neither the Committee nor School Board addressed or surveyed the community *before* creating a plan, and upset at the plan itself: to remove students from two selected districts for an inadequately explored educational benefit. Many Barnard voters were also concerned about the sustainability of a PreK-2 school in the building after the 4-year period of no school closures ended. At the November 3, 2016 WCSU Act 46 Study Committee meeting, Barnard representative Heather Little brought Barnard's negative reception and specific concerns to the attention of the WCSU Act 46 Study Committee. Responding to concerns to a degree, the committee shifted their proposal to a PreK-4 restructuring of Barnard and Reading schools but otherwise moved forward with their merger plan.

In November 2016, a group of residents formed a Town of Barnard Act 46 Forum Committee in November 2016. Concerned about the lack of public engagement, this Committee produced two forums designed to inform the community about the details of the merger plan and provide a forum for discussion and debate. These were held on December 19, 2016 and January 30, 2017, and involved community members, Study Committee representatives, and legislators Appendix A.vii. *Community Outreach*). Ultimately, Barnard community concerns did not further impact the Final Plan.

c. Inequity and Insufficient Justification for Restructuring

¹³ See www.cnuz.tv for video of the event.

The first iteration of the WCSU Study Committee merger plan to restructure Barnard Academy to PreK-2 and reduce the Principal to .5 FTE was widely seen as inequitable, insufficiently justified, and a threat to the sustainability of Barnard Academy. Even when the Study Committee Plan pulled back its recommendation to a PreK-4 restructuring as it remains in their Final Report of January 18, 2017 (Appendix J: *WCSU Act 46 Study Committee Final Report, January 18, 2017*), many of Barnard’s arguments against their plan remain.

The impetus, or rationale, for restructuring Barnard and Reading’s elementary schools was to fund a goal the Study Committee initiated early on in its process: to increase Unified Arts and Physical Education hours in all schools to equalize hours across schools¹⁴. Many in Barnard questioned the Study Committee’s interpretation of equity in terms of “specials” hours, whether equalizing these hours was an educationally valuable goal, and whether the impacts on students of restructuring would be worth the trade-offs. No studies or examples were presented to demonstrate the educational value of this across-the-board increase in specials beyond state requirements¹⁵, and the Study Committee proceeded without adequate exploration and evidence of value. This approach is especially concerning considering that there are not significant differences in program opportunity across WCSU districts (see Appendix A.vii: “*WCSU Specials Data 2016*”).

The would-be impact of restructuring on Barnard students and community would be significant. First, the presence of fifth and sixth grades at Barnard Academy is educationally valuable to those students as well as the younger ones, as the fifth and sixth graders take on significant leadership responsibility at a critical age within the tight-knit school community and proudly serve as mentors to the younger students. Further, the increased burden of busing to distant schools decreases developmentally important sleep time and quality time with family. It also provides an additional barrier to access extracurricular or enrichment programming outside school hours, as transportation solutions are more difficult for families to secure for more distant schools. Under the Study Committee Plan, these burdens would inequitably be levied only on Barnard and Reading students, creating awkward close-together transitions in 5th grade and then 7th grade, and putting them in a disadvantaged position with the student body.

Lastly, the savings from removing grades 5 and 6 from Barnard and Reading--amounting to removing a single teacher from each school since these buildings combine grades 5/6--was nominal in comparison to \$648,768 in projected costs of increasing Unified Arts as detailed by the Plan (Appendix J: *WCSU Act 46 Study Committee Final Report, January 18, 2017*, p 69). Barnard voters saw this as a deeply flawed plan.

¹⁴ At that time, Barnard Academy met all Vermont Education Quality Standards except in P.E. independently from merging, The Barnard School Board voted to increase PE hours to meet that standard.

¹⁵ The Study Committee created a document that compared specials hours and stated incorrectly that Vermont State Board of Education Series 2000 - Education Quality Standards require that Art and Music offerings shall be provided “at least twice weekly, or the equivalent thereof” (Appendix A.vi. “*WCSU Specials FTE by Town FY17*”)

d. Misinformation

The arguments utilized in the Act 46 Study Committee process contained significant errors in relevant data, used as justification for restructuring the Barnard school. False claims about Barnard Academy were continually made by the 706b Committee to voters in all towns at multiple community forums.¹⁶ In Study Committee presentations, voters in other towns were told that Barnard had a tiny and shrinking enrollment, had high costs associated with small size, and the school was characterized as sub-par. In fact, Barnard's enrollment is growing, Barnard has had one of the lower per-pupil-costs within the SU for many years (Appendix F.ii *Total Education Spending per Equalized Pupil, in relation to SU schools*), and is consistently among the highest performing of the schools in the SU (Appendix E: *Student Results*). The "facts", used to strengthen the case for restructuring were simply not true and such falsities undoubtedly influenced voters (for comparisons of enrollments and costs, see Appendix B.ii. *Tables B.1-B.6* and Appendix F.i-iii. *Equalized Pupils, Total Educational Spending per Equalized Pupil, and Equalized Tax Rates*).

This misinformation reflected a dominating perspective that carried assumptions about poor performance and small schools that simply did not bear weight. The Final Plan that subsequently emerged from that process contains a restructuring plan that is based on these factual errors and would harm Barnard Academy's viability.

Additionally, there were misunderstandings regarding options for Unified Board composition at both Act 46 Study Committee deliberations and forums. Constitutional proportionality for board representation was often framed as requiring a Proportional-by-Town model (eg. see <http://cnuz.tv/res-school-board-meeting-on-act-46/>), as opposed to acknowledging the legitimacy of hybrid models of representation (AOE Memo "Board Membership; Nomination & Voting Process; Advisable Districts Clarification and Guidance"¹⁷). The vastly unequal Board representation in the Study Committee Plan (6 members from Woodstock and 2 each for the remaining districts) was misleadingly couched as the only option for a unified Board.

ii. WCSU Merger Vote (March 2017)

On Town Meeting Day, March 7, 2017, Barnard residents voted No--155 No - 103 Yes--to the merger plan created by the WCSU Act 46 Study Committee. With two resignations, the three-person School Board turned over and the new three-person Board of Directors was sworn in on

¹⁶ Many of these instances were recorded on video. Just five days before the 2017 vote, the Chair of the Act 46 Study Committee told residents at a Pomfret meeting that Barnard and Reading were chosen for restructuring because they were the two schools with the two highest per pupil costs. He also asserted this at Bridgewater and Reading forums, with the Reading forum on video (see <http://cnuz.tv/res-school-board-meeting-on-act-46/>). In fact, for FY13-FY17 Barnard school district had the second lowest per pupil costs in the SU (Appendix F.ii. *Total Education Spending per Equalized Pupil, in Relation to SU Schools*). In another example, a 706b Committee Member in Killington told constituents during a forum that Barnard's enrollment is "in the thirties" to justify restructuring (see <http://cnuz.tv/kes-school-board-meeting-on-act-46/>). In fact, enrollment in Barnard for 2016-2017 was 69 on Opening Day, and 72 by January.

¹⁷ <http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-governance-guidance-board-membership-proportionality-voting.pdf>

March 7, 2017. The new School Board immediately engaged the community on the merger issue and created a subcommittee—Barnard Academy Alternative Structures Committee—to research and develop possible alternatives to accepting the WCSU merger plan. After soliciting volunteers, committee members were appointed by the school board. Initial committee members were Andrew Cole, Carin Ewing Park, Pamela Fraser, Matt Piper, and Linda Treash. In May 2017, Ingrid Johnson replaced Matt Piper. After this 60% margin No vote, there was no petition for a revote as was done twice in the other town that initially voted against the merger, Reading. Community opposition to the WCSU merger plan in Barnard remained—and remains—strong.

iii. Alternative Structure Committee Work (March 2017-December 2017)

In the interest of transparency and access, Barnard’s Alternative Structures Committee (ASC) created a website to document their activities in April 2017, www.sustainingbarnardacademy.org. The ASC invited Donna Russo Savage and Brad James of the Vermont Agency of Education to a Barnard School Board meeting on April 11, 2017 to give a presentation about Barnard’s options and to answer committee and community questions regarding Act 46 (Appendix A.iii.d. *Barnard Academy Alternative Structures Committee Meeting Dates*, with link to minutes). The ASC conducted a survey of Barnard residents to get a concrete sense of the electorate viewpoint on school governance, budgets, merging, and sustainability; this was the first town survey about the school done in twenty years (Appendix A.i *Survey*). The survey garnered 94 responses, a 13-14% response rate which is typical of the 10-15% average response rate of online surveys¹⁸. On June 7, 2017, the ASC held a special meeting to discuss survey results with the public, their research on governance options for the school and their recommendations to the School Board. At this time, the committee presented four options:

- 1) Pursue an Act 49, Section 3 exemption on the basis of either Geographic Isolation (per 2011 Act 153 report) or Structural Isolation (on the basis of our two-year fully-funded PreKindergarten)
- 2) Pursue an Alternative Governance Structure proposal to maintain our Board and budget in interests of Act 46 goals
- 3) Merge with the WCSU only if their Board would consider renegotiation of three offending Articles of Agreement
- 4) Merge with the WCSU

The School Board and community members were supportive of the effort to pursue either more fair terms for merging with the WCSU or develop an AGS proposal. There was also support to pursue the question of eligibility for the Act 49 Section 3 exemption on the basis of Geographic Isolation.

At the same time, the Barnard School Board was reaching out to districts in the region to discuss possible merging or sharing of resources. Our School Board Chair attended a Stockbridge School

¹⁸ <https://www.surveygizmo.com/survey-blog/survey-response-rates/>

Board meeting to discuss the possibilities of resource-sharing or a Joint Contract. Our Board representatives also went to Reading, and Reading members came to Barnard to discuss possible ways to work together. Ultimately, Stockbridge decided to pursue options within their own SU, and Reading held multiple re-votes and eventually joined the WCMUUSD. We had also participated in conversations with a West Windsor representative regarding West Windsor joining Windsor Central and merging with Reading, but because West Windsor was involved in a 706b committee in a different SU, they could not actually engage with us until that process ended. Reading joining the WCMUUSD ended that conversation possibility. Neighboring towns, Bethel and Royalton, are in a different supervisory union and have been involved in 706b committees thus eliminating the possibility of engaging with them.

On July 17, 2017, Reading and Barnard School Board Chairs co-authored an email requesting renegotiation of three WCMUUSD Articles of Agreement deemed unfair by our Boards and communities. Renegotiation of these Articles was also addressed at a WCSU Board Meeting on June 12, 2017 (Appendix A.iii. *Committee/Board Meeting Dates*). The three Articles were those that address composition of Board of Directors, restructuring of Barnard and Reading elementary schools, and voting procedures around school closure (see “Barriers to Merger” section below for more detail). This request to re-negotiate and revise Articles was declined via email and at the June 12 WCSU Board Meeting. Board members expressed the inability to address revision of the Articles outside of WCMUUSD Board meetings, as well as a belief that the issues had been fully vetted during the Study Committee process.¹⁹

Finally, after pursuing with legal counsel the question of eligibility for a 3X1 exemption under Act 49, we deemed our isolation status too insecure to pursue an application for the exemption. The Alternative Structures Committee continued its work to develop an Alternative Governance Structure (AGS) proposal pursuant to Section 9 of Act 46, garnering continued support of the School Board and the community in its September 6, 2017 presentation to the School Board. The development of this proposal has been made entirely by volunteer effort, with no financial support for legal or consulting services.

C. Reflections on Process

i. Thoroughness of Process

¹⁹ Via email, three members-elect of the WCMUUSD Board declined interest in renegotiating Articles of Agreement despite a failed vote. This was in part due to the lack of ratification of the MUUSD at that time (Appendix A.iv.b). At the June 12, 2017 WCSU Board meeting, some Board members agreed with Barnard and Reading’s contention that restructuring to increase Unified Arts programming (in the Study Committee Plan) was not educationally necessary or financially significant. Others expressed the hope that Barnard join the merger plan. However, members did not wish to put anything in writing regarding a commitment to revisit the weaknesses of the Study Committee Plan and its attendant Articles of Agreement. They expressed their belief that Barnard and Reading Boards should trust the future Board and merge without a formal agreement to re-negotiate or discuss renegotiation. WCSU June 12, 2017 minutes state “The group discussed issues from individual towns and the possibilities of moving conversations forward” but do not detail this conversation.

Barnard spent two fruitful years studying and analyzing the school's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the five Goals of Act 46 and considered a variety of relationships and/or governance changes. The Board of Directors and community members have been highly engaged and active in the search for the best possible route to comply with Act 46, involving an Act 46 Study Committee, Barnard community forums, and conversations with Agency of Education representatives as well as State Senators and Representatives. (Appendix A: *Our Decision-Making Process*).

ii. Barriers to Merger

- The Study Committee Final Plan threatens our taxpayer supported commitment to full-day fully funded preschool opportunities
- The Final Plan threatens the sustainability of Barnard Academy
- The Final Plan is not equitable to the children of Barnard
- The Final Plan was not developed or delivered within a fair and objective process
- The driving rationale for the Final Plan rests on an assumed premise of debatable educational value (increasing Unified Arts programming across the SU)

iii. Openness to Merger

Barnard is open to exploring the possibility of a merger in the future, should such a merger not impede the agility necessary to maintain both our fiscal responsibility (transparency, accountability, and efficiency) and our quality, equitable academic offerings. We continue to hold that in order to protect the best quality educational opportunities for Barnard children, as well as to best meet the goals of Act 46, this School Board requires *at a minimum* that the WCMUUSD demonstrate a commitment to reexamine the faulty assumptions at work in the Final Plan and *a willingness to reconsider* the following three Articles of Agreement:

1) *Article 8: Board of School Directors Representation*

The Study Committee Plan includes a proportional model of representation on the Unified Board, wherein Woodstock would have six (6) representatives and each of the other districts -- Barnard, Bridgewater, Plymouth, Pomfret, Killington, and Reading -- would have two (2).

2) *Article 15: Restructuring of Elementary School Configurations*

3) *Article 13: Provisions for Closure of a School*

The Study Committee Plan allows for the closure of a school (after a four-year restriction on closure) by an affirmative vote of the majority of the Board of Directors and a majority vote of the combined electorate of the SU.

We have already detailed our objections to Article 15 above (Section B.i.c). The vastly uneven Board representation of Article 8 currently enacted for the WCMUUSD, combined with school closure provision of Article 13 greatly dilutes the voice of the townspeople of the school slated for closure (unless it is a Woodstock school). This would not even require that Directors from the

majority of the towns cast an affirmative vote for the closure. It is unprecedented for a larger neighbor to have the power to overrule a community decision in this regard. This imbalance of political power strikes us as creating an equity issue for our residents and our students.

We would consider a WCSU merger plan that 1) includes a hybrid model of Board representation, 2) contains more protections within the voting process for school closures, and 3) eliminates the Article regarding restructuring schools. The revision of the Articles might include language such as follows:

1) Article 8: Board of School Directors Representation:

A forming town district's representation on the Union School District Board of School Directors will be determined as an at-large "hybrid model". Membership on the Union School District Board is apportioned to each town. Apportionment does not have to be proportional to the town's population. The initial membership of the fourteen (14) member of the Unified Union School District Board of Directors shall be as follows: Number of School Board Directors by Town: Barnard 2, Bridgewater 2, Killington 2, Plymouth 2, Pomfret 2, Reading 2, Woodstock 2.²⁰

2) REMOVE: Article 15: Restructuring of Elementary School Configurations

3) Article 13: Provisions for Closure of a School

An affirmative vote by a super-majority of the Board of Directors shall be required to close a school AND/OR A positive vote of the majority of the electorate in the town in which the school is located is required to close a school AND/OR Budget or capacity triggers shall be established as prerequisites for the consideration of school closure by the Board of Directors.²¹

²⁰ In addition to protecting the interests of the citizens of the smaller towns in our SU, this model better represents the purported view of the Study Committee and the current WCMUUSD, that each Director on the Unified Board is responsible for the educational success of children across the entire SU not just those in the Director's own district.

²¹ We note that the following merger plans have this type of protection: Addison Northeast requires board majority and majority in town where school is located; Caledonia North requires board super majority and majority in town where school is located; Windham Central requires majority vote in town where school is located; and Grand Isle requires board majority and majority in town where school is located.

SECTION II: How Does This Proposal Align with Act 46 Goals?

A. Overview of Alignment

Maintaining school board independence within WCSU will allow us to best meet the goals of Act 46. Continuing a long history of collaboration and resource-sharing, our plan will allow Barnard to continue to support, and be supported by, the WCMUUSD and the WCSU. Barnard Academy will continue its current operating structure of PreK-6, and Barnard will continue to send 7-12 students to Woodstock Union MS/HS. Barnard Academy will continue to be housed in Windsor Central Supervisory Union and will be a Non-Member Elementary District (NMED) in the WCMUUSD. Barnard will maintain its current three-member Board of Directors and its annual budget shall be approved by resident/taxpayers at Town Meeting each year.

Some of what Barnard Academy already does to meet the goals of quality, equity, operational efficiency, transparency, and accountability could continue in a merger with Windsor Central's unified districts. But importantly, there are several ways that Barnard Academy achieves the goals of the Act that would be under immediate threat should we agree to a merger under the current Merger Plan and the financial model their plan depends on. These are:

Leading the Commitment to Early Education and Innovative Learning, Supporting Quality and Equity

- Barnard voters support a fully-funded full-day PreK—*up to 35 hours for four-year-olds, and up to 21 hours for three-year-olds*. This essential program is *at risk in the current merger Plan*. No other district in the SU demonstrates this commitment to their preschoolers, and there was no discussion of such a commitment to preschool programming during the Study Committee process.
- Barnard PreK and After School Program serves working families within our community and provides an enriching and supportive environment for children.²²
- Working with a committed Board and supportive community, Principal Thein is implementing innovative initiatives that support inquiry-based and personalized learning (Appendix C.iii. *Continuous Improvement Plan Goals 2018-2020*)
- Budgetary agility is important for continued innovation and quality within a small school setting.

Sustaining a Strong Operationally-Efficient School within a Vibrant Community

²² The addition of PreKindergarten in 2008 has been extremely helpful for an easier, smoother transition to elementary school for our students and families. PreK became full-time in FY16. The children have extra time to learn to participate in a group setting, more time for language/vocabulary development, more time to learn literacy, math, science, and social science skills/information in play, song, poem, finger plays, manipulatives, books, and videos. Families are ushered into the school family and children have more confidence in approaching academics and social situations. By building a strong foundation for them we help them in future academic and social success.

- Barnard Academy has seen steady to increasing enrollment over the past 10 years
- Barnard Academy has the second lowest per-pupil spending in the SU
- The Barnard School Board, the community, teachers and parents are a tight web of support for the school, which is seen as the heart of our small town. Maintaining this tight web of support is critical for our school's success.
- Undercutting a school and a community that is thriving would likely affect the SU enrollment patterns negatively and could result in increased costs per pupil for the SU.

Ensuring Real Opportunity for Open Dialogue with Taxpayers Around School Budgets

- Transparency and accountability to taxpayers is safeguarded best by open town-hall debate, coupled with from-the-floor voting on the school budget.
- Australian ballot, and eliminating town-hall debate, will serve only to make school budgets more opaque and unresponsive to district voters. Consistently low turn-out at Woodstock Union High School Middle School annual meetings and budget presentations support the contention that Australian ballot votes on these budgets are minimally informed.
- We will continue to share all aspects of our budget with our voters leading up to and during Town Meeting. The combined budget format of the WCMUUSD can lack the detail necessary for meaningful transparency and accountability to taxpayers.

Maintaining School Board Responsiveness and Agility Supported by Taxpayers

- Flexibility and creativity are paramount to administering the budget in an efficient way
- Maintaining an independent 3-member School Board, working together with the community and school administration, is currently the best way to protect the level of efficacy required to deliver high quality education at a price taxpayers value.
- As the Barnard Academy School Board continues efforts to achieve low-cost solutions to programmatic and infrastructure needs, it acts as a point of comparison for the budgetary decisions of the WCMUUSD.

B. The Ability of Barnard Academy to Meet or Exceed Goals 1 & 2 of Act 46: Quality and Equity of Educational Opportunities

i. Goal 1- Quality

In support of Goal 1--Educational Quality--Barnard Academy:

- Is implementing a **Place-Based Education** framework using the social, cultural, and natural environment in which our students live as an inquiry-based learning environment to gain knowledge and skills across the curriculum, including reading performance.

- Provides increased opportunities for **Outdoor Learning** through expansion of trail network and outdoor classroom, participation in **Forest Fridays**, and development of gardens and pollinator program
- Has high level of **proficiency** in Math, ELA, and Science (Appendix E.ii. *Student SBAC Assessments* and Appendix E.iii. *Student NECAP (Science) Assessments*)²³
- Has high rate of **teacher-retention**
- Teacher collaboration within school and SU (Appendix C.i. *Elementary Program Information* and Appendix C.ii. *Staffing*)
- Leads **Early Education** in the WCSU in developing a four-star STARS PreKindergarten program in 2008. This program offers fully-funded full-day preschool for 3-year-olds (3 days/week) and 4-year-olds (5 days/week).
- Leads **Commitment to Early Education** by funding Unified Arts coursework for PreK students (Library, Art, Music, and PE)
- Follows the WCSU tiered system of support (**MTSS**) for **Individual Personal Learning Plans** and for **Special Education Services**.
- Has committed, licensed, qualified **Staffing**, with strong systems of oversight, support, and professional development. Follows State recommendations for 0-20 students per teacher in K-3, and 0-25 students per teacher for 4-6.
- Has a **Curriculum** written, delivered and aligned with **Common Core Math and Language Arts Standards**
- Meets all **Vermont Educational Quality Standards** recommendations for literacy (including critical thinking, language, reading, speaking and listening, and writing); mathematical content and practices; scientific inquiry and content knowledge; d. global citizenship (including the concepts of civics, geography, world language, cultural studies and history); physical education and health education as defined in 16 V.S.A. §131; f. artistic expression (including visual, media and performing arts); and the teaching of transferable skills (communication, collaboration, creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and use of technology).
- In accord with **Next Generation Science Standards**, continues to develop S.T.E.A.M. programs that focus on inquiry-skill development in Science (Barnard Academy in-progress 2018-20 Continuous Improvement Plan (Appendix C.iii. *Continuous Improvement Plan Goals 2018-2020*))
- Supports advanced **technology literacy** through Scratch computer programming.
- Maintain and increase **strategic integration of community resources** such as Dartmouth, the Hood Museum, and Montshire Museum into the curriculum
- Equalizes **preparedness for 7-12 grades** with other SU schools
- Offers strong **Arts programming** through full-school PreK-6 performances and special programming such as an Artist-in-Residence program

²³ An average of 2015-2017 SBAC scores shows over 72% proficiency in both Math and ELA. Averaged 2015-17 NECAP testing show a scale score of 449, with 85.7% of students proficient and 4.8% proficient with distinction.

- Offers **Friday Ski Program** for eight weeks every winter, with alternative options for students who do not wish to or are not able to ski. In the past these have included ice skating, snowshoeing and art classes. Ski Runners scholarships and the Barnard BEES support ski fees and ski rentals for students-in-need.
- Provides an **Afterschool Program** for all grade levels, with elective classes such as Lego Robotics, Advanced Robotics, Aquaponics, Digital Movie Making, Carpentry, Martial Arts, Yoga, Experimental Science, Natural Science, Drumming and Engineering challenges.
- Has a high level of **Volunteerism and Community**-involvement, and related extra-curricular student opportunities, supplies, programs, and services supported by the Barnard Education Fund (BEF), the parent-teacher organization the Barnard Educational Endeavor Society (the BEES), community non-profit BarnArts Center for the Arts.
- Developed **Farm-to-School** programming in collaboration with parents and community members
- Connects curricular and extracurricular **Enrichment** programming and field trips to outstanding local resources: community centers, museums and the National Parks Service.
- Increases regional access to team sports and recreation. The **Barnard Recreation** program accepts children from other towns and regularly has students from Bridgewater and Pomfret on our baseball and soccer teams.
- **Extracurricular clubs and teams** provide additional opportunities for achievement: In 2016 Barnard's spelling team was District Champion. In 2017 Barnard's team was Regional Champion, and placed third in the State-level competition on November 18, 2017 behind larger South Burlington and Brattleboro schools.

Additional steps we are taking, or plan to take, to better meet Goal 1 within our proposed governance structure

- Implement **Professional Development for Place-Based Learning**
- **Expand Foreign Language** instruction
- **Create Maker's Lab**
- **Expand Farm-to-School** programming
- **Engage with global/international community** of students via online sister classrooms
- **Offer 1-2 lunches per week** through the BEES and Farm-to-School
- **Strengthen science proficiencies** by targeting intervention as done with math and literacy, as outlined in Barnard Academy 2018-20 Continuous Improvement Plan in progress (Appendix C.iii. *Continuous Improvement Plan Goals 2018-2020*)
- Work with Middle and High School to **address decreased math proficiencies** for Barnard students in higher grades

ii. Goal 2- Equity of Opportunity

In support of Goal 2--Equity of Opportunity--Barnard Academy:

- Offers **full-day fully-funded PreKindergarten** beyond minimum State requirements [fully-funded full-day PreK for 3-year-olds (3 days/week) & fully-funded full-day PreK for 4-year-olds (5 days/week)]²⁴
- Attained **4-stars** in STARS PreK program
- Addresses **Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)** with Core Knowledge curriculum
- Has **Unified Arts and PE classes for PreK** students in music, library, technology and art
- Provides **opportunities in Unified Arts and PE classes for K-6** students²⁵ in music, library, technology, foreign language and visual and performing arts **equitable with all schools in SU**
- Offers State financial aid opportunities for qualifying students for **licensed After School Program** for children PreK-6, with enrichment opportunities such as Lego Robotics, Advanced Robotics, Aquaponics, Digital Movie Making, Carpentry, Martial Arts, Yoga, Ballet, Experimental Science, Natural Science, Drumming classes and Engineering challenges
- Works with WCSU and a community non-profit organization to implement the **Barnard Buddies** mentoring program, pairing adult mentors with children-at-risk.
- Works with WCSU to provide **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support** as needed
- Works with WCSU to provide **Special Education Services** as needed.
- Works with district partners in WCSU to provide **enhanced curricular programming** (Montshire Museum Partnership, Marsh-Billings week-long science immersion).
- Provides **financial assistance for Friday Ski Program** for eight weeks every winter, through the Barnard BEES. Alternative options for students who do not wish to or are not able to ski are available.
- Increases access to **cultural programming** through support by BEF and BEES

²⁴ Research has shown the importance of providing full day kindergarten and full day PreKindergarten programs in promoting school readiness and closing achievement gaps in elementary school and beyond. The studies show children attending quality programs gain greater skills in language, literacy, math, and need fewer interventions of special education or retentions. Studies show that children attending PreK and full day kindergarten have higher reading skills in grade three. Longitudinal studies show that the effects of PreK positively impact school attendance, standardized test scores, completing high school, attending college, and earning greater salaries. Those attending PreK were less likely to be involved in criminal activities. Vermont-specific research has shown that state spending on special education, health care, social welfare programs and the criminal justice system can be reduced by supporting high-quality early care and learning programs for young children.

²⁵ Regarding the Act 46 Study Committee contention that ‘specials’ hours were not equalized across the SU: it is correct that Barnard Academy did not meet the VEQS due to offering PE less than twice weekly in 2016-17, but this was rectified in 2017-18. However, overall, the supposed deficiencies in Unified Arts and foreign language instruction hours were not well-studied or well-presented. While some schools were discussed in terms of having a language class twice weekly, for example, these class were shorter sessions, whereas in Barnard, there was a single longer class (Appendices A.vi & A.vii). In January 2018, Spanish class times will increase an additional 20-30 minutes per week. Additionally, options to further increase Spanish, and add German and/or Chinese are being studied.

- Increases access to team **sports and recreation** through support by Barnard Recreation Committee.
- Place-Based Education with Outdoor Classroom and Nature Trails provides learning in a setting that has been shown to have **advantages for students with learning challenges** such as Attention Deficit Disorder and others.²⁶

Additional steps we are taking, or plan to take, to better meet Goal 2 within our proposed governance structure

- **Increase financial access to After School Program** to further support working families and provide enrichment opportunities for children PreK-6
- Continue work with WCSU and community organizations to **expand the Barnard Buddies** mentoring program
- Continue work with WCSU to **provide Special Education Services** as needed
- **Implement breakfast and lunch** by shipping food in and sharing food costs with TPVS
- Introduce **Foreign Language instruction in Spanish for the PreK** students as we do for the kindergarten students.

C. The Ability of Barnard Academy to Meet or Exceed Goals 3-5: Maximize Operational Efficiencies, Promote Transparency and Accountability, Deliver Fiscal Strength and Value

i. Goal 3 - Maximize Operational Efficiencies

In support of goal 3 -- Operational Efficiency -- Barnard Academy:

- Has seen **increasing enrollment over the past 10 years** (where nearly all other districts in the SU have seen a decline) (Appendix B.iii. *Enrollment for WUMS for 5 Years*)
- Has the **second lowest per pupil spending** in the SU (Appendix F.ii. *Total Equalized Spending per Equalized Pupil*)
- Utilizes **economies of scale where achievable without sacrificing quality**
- Reduces transportation costs by **combining/sharing busing contracts**
- Achieves cost savings from **combining purchasing contracts**
- Achieves greater efficiency and flexibility from sharing personnel

²⁶ Outdoor classrooms – outdoor spaces used to facilitate learning – have numerous benefits that can both build upon and enhance the learning done in traditional classroom settings, and provide opportunities for learning that traditional classrooms cannot deliver. They have been shown to have positive impacts in all areas of a child’s developmental health: social, emotional, physical, and cognitive. They are an ideal environment for the inquiry-based learning that is a key component of STEM education and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), supporting student gains in science, math, social studies, and language arts. Finally, the outdoor classroom offers an alternative to text-based instruction which may be especially helpful for children with different learning styles and those with specific learning challenges (Autism, Asperger’s, Attention Deficit Disorder).

- Maintains **high student-teacher ratio** within WCSU and compared to Vermont average through merged classrooms. For example, for FY17, Barnard PreK-6 ratio was 12.07 compared to 9.48 WCSU and 10.55 VT (see Table III.2 and Appendix D.i. *Ratios*).
- Designing and implementing a system of **qualitative and quantitative data collection** to drive instruction and improve learning moving toward **Personalized Learning SU-wide**
- Increasing emphasis on **expeditionary learning**
- Examining which student traits we seek to foster in **development of learning profiles**
- Emphasizing stewardship, community service, and social-emotional learning in learning
- Works with the WSCUUSD and WCSU to **share services, programs, and personnel** such as Unified Arts, physical education, foreign language teachers, special educators and para-educators
- Contributes to **technology-sharing in SU**, which helps equalize access to technology across the region. We share our computers with the entire supervisory union during the summer program SOAK
- Shares **phone system and Student Information System (SIS)** that allows easy transfer of student data across preK-12.
- **Shares resources** with neighbor The Prosper Valley School - lesson plans and professional development in partnership with the Montshire Science Center
- Continues to work with WCSU to **coordinate and/or share of curricula, professional development, programs, resources and services across schools**²⁷. Most part-time staff are already employed in two, three, or more schools within the region.

Additional steps we are taking, or plan to take, to better meet Goal 3 within our proposed governance structure

- Develop strategy for public outreach regarding Barnard Academy's unique Place-Based Education²⁸ program, attracting more families to the school
- Annual public review of Board activity and school initiatives
- Discuss possible **inclusion in centralized food service program within the WCSU**
- Maintain successful **shared teacher contract management**
- Maintain **shared healthcare contract management**
- Continue **technology-sharing**, which helps equalize access to technology across the region, including sharing computers with students within Supervisory Union during SOAK summer programming
- Potentially increase savings by **purchasing computers and software with WCMUUSD**, to be discussed this year by the WCMUUSD Board

²⁷ Specifically, the following services are currently centralized: Special Education; Speech and Language Programs; Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapy; Early Essential Education program; Health Insurance and Benefits; Human Resources; Payroll; Busing; Communication (Phones/Internet); and most purchasing contracts; student assessments; Transportation accounting; criminal record checks; public school approval compliance checks; Act 51 reporting; tuition students billing and accounting; reporting of required data to federal and state agencies; memberships in VSBA, VSA, ASCD, VSBO, and CEC.

²⁸ Our inquiry based, expeditionary learning will be place-based and integrate STEAM. It will also have a strong commitment to community service and environmental education, leading to students being connected to the earth.

- Potentially increase savings by purchasing books and supplies with WCMUUSD.
- Discuss with WCMUUSD and WCSU the **possibility of further centralizing Special Education** costs
- Act as a “check and balance” to the WCMUUSD going forward, we can **encourage open dialogue and a point of comparison** concerning what works and what does not work in terms of centralizing costs²⁹

ii. Goal 4 - Transparency and Accountability

In support of Goal 4 -- transparency and accountability -- Barnard Academy:

- **Communicates with the public** via notices at Town Hall, Barnard Academy, the Barnard General Store, and via school and town listservs
- **Shares SBAC results** with WCSU for analysis
- Submits to **Annual Fiscal Audit**
- Offers transparency and accountability to the **Barnard taxpayer via open, town-hall information-sharing and debate of the school budget**
- Is committed to Town Hall debate of school budget at Town Meeting Day, **ensuring community perspectives are heard**, rather than relegating budget to Australian ballot
- Principal Hannah Thein is part of team working on WCSU common student assessment system that extends into MS/HS in development

Additional steps we are taking, or plan to take, to better meet Goal 4 within our proposed governance structure

- New Principal, Hannah Thein, is taking action to **improve communication both within and without of the school** and to increase already-strong community engagement through the implementation of the following:
 - Quarterly **Roundtable parent/staff discussions**
 - Informal coffee with the Principal meetings
 - Weekly communication to families that incorporates community news
 - Revitalization of **Barnard Academy website**, connected to Google Calendar
 - **Information sharing among teachers and staff** via Google Docs
- **Increase public awareness** of budget issues

iii. Goal 5 - Education Delivered at a Cost that Parents, Voters, and Taxpayers Value

²⁹ Notably, there have been cases in which we found that we found increased cost-savings outside of cost-sharing arrangements--such as with a recent paper supply arrangement--and would like the flexibility to be able to continue to do that. We continue to strive for increased scale in cost-sharing where it actually creates savings, but we have found that sometimes it does not and we have been trapped in unnecessarily costly contracts (paper) or unnecessary services (phone). Another example of this is Barnard Academy’s internet service through EC Fiber at no cost due to a donation by the company, so cost-sharing would not be necessary.

In support of Goal 5 -- delivering fiscal strength and value -- Barnard Academy:

- Maintains an independent School Board, which provides us with the **agility and responsiveness** necessary to achieve innovative and quality academic performance in a **fiscally responsible** way
- **Enables nimble decision-making** that positively impacts Barnard families, such as funding full-day preschool beyond the State minimum requirements, and increases student success
- Maintains a **strong community** school in Barnard, contributing to the already active revitalization of our local economy, and continuing to bring new families into our supervisory union.
- **Serves Barnard's working families**, with enriching and supportive choice for child care within their community: fully funded full-day preschool program for 3 and 4 year olds, and with PreK-6 After School program
- Continue to **work with the voters of the Town of Barnard**, who have passed the annual school budget each year for decades. Voters have concurred with cost-saving measures such as combined classrooms, as well as the value of some cost-increases such as funding full-day PreKindergarten with Unified Arts instruction.
- Maintain an **independent pathway to finance supplies or programming when most cost-efficient** (eg. BOOST health and fitness program, internet service, paper supplies).
- Hope to continue to be a **recipient of a Small Schools Grant** based on distance to the next school with capacity, combined with seasonally difficult terrain (see Further Details on Geographic Isolation above). If Barnard is removed from this list, we will apply for the SSG on the basis of academic excellence and operational efficiency and determine necessary changes in our budget thereafter.
- The **Town of Barnard voted 155-103 (60%) against the joining the WCSU merger**. Our survey also indicates that the majority of residents are in favor of maintaining independent governance.
- Maintaining **two Board members on WCMUUSD** that represent Barnard's MS/HS student's needs, and maintain engagement with educational ideas and issues in the region.

Additional steps we are taking, or plan to take, to better meet Goal 5 within our proposed governance structure

- Add **links to budgetary information** on school website to foster wide awareness and input from community.
- Continue to work with the SU to consider how further efficiencies in **Special Education funding** may help us bring costs down.
- Continue to work with the SU to consider how further efficiencies in **Employee Health Care funding** may help us bring costs down.

SECTION III: Financial Analysis of Alternative Governance Structure

A. Budgetary Impacts

Historically, the cost per equalized pupil in Barnard has been well-positioned within the SU, at second lowest in SU for the past seven years (Table III.1), and below the state average.

Table III.1 Cost per Equalized Pupil in WCSU Elementary Districts (source: AOE)

	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Barnard	\$12,249.02	\$12,331.11	\$12,931.58	\$13,420.56	\$14,461.10	\$15,335.02	\$14,986.13
Bridgewater	\$10,161.66	\$10,746.63	\$12,063.54	\$15,242.94	\$18,308.34 **	\$10,743.57 **	\$12,213.55 **
Pomfret	\$13,920.29	\$14,623.64	\$14,775.16	\$16,514.55			
Killington	\$14,178.12	\$13,693.17	\$13,052.00	\$13,538.08	\$13,538.08	\$17,153.03	\$15,577.23
Woodstock	\$12,980.42	\$13,175.90	\$13,176.06	\$14,018.80	\$14,495.83	\$15,541.48	\$15,239.78
Reading	\$15,109.18	\$15,006.45	\$18,651.44	\$18,449.85	\$17,055.40	\$17,208.30	\$17,359.43

**In FY16 Bridgewater and Pomfret merged to become the Prosper Valley School

Barnard and Barnard Academy have found innovative ways to contain costs in the past and are fully aware of the need to continue our vigilance and innovation. For example, BA has utilized combined-grade classrooms for many years. This has contributed to our having the highest student-teacher ratio in our SU for the past two years and the second highest student-staff ratio in our SU³⁰.

³⁰ Because data sets are different in data from different AOE reports (*School Reports* and *Teacher, Staff, Student Ratios*), and from WCSU (*WCSU Board and WCMUUSD Board Meeting Book, October 17, 2017*), we are including all three data sets for Student-Teacher ratios, and Student-Staff ratios, for analysis.

Table III.2 Student-Teacher Ratio in WCSU Elementary Districts (source: AOE <i>School Reports</i> . See Appendix D.i.a.)				
	<u>FY14</u>	<u>FY15</u>	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>
Barnard	9.12	10.29	11.75	12.07
Bridgewater	6.21	6.21	9.43**	10.51**
Pomfret	8.91	8.49		
Kiillington	10.94	11.58	10.79	10.89
Woodstock	9.89	9.51	8.40	10.88
Reading	10.98	9.42	8.69	10.19

**In FY16 Bridgewater and Pomfret merged to become the Prosper Valley School

Table III.3 Student-Teacher Ratio in WCSU Elementary Districts (source: AOE <i>Teacher, Staff, Student Ratios, Wednesday October 4, 2017</i> . See Appendix D.i.b)				
	<u>FY14</u>	<u>FY15</u>	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>
Barnard	-	-	10.34	10.83
Bridgewater	-	-	9.31**	9.26**
Pomfret	-	-		
Kiillington	-	-	9.52	9.59
Woodstock	-	-	8.40	9.24
Reading	-	-	7.45	9.15

**In FY16 Bridgewater and Pomfret merged to become the Prosper Valley School

Table III.4 Student-Staff Ratio in WCSU Elementary Districts (source: <i>WCSU Board and WCMUUSD Board Meeting Book, October 17, 2017, page 26. See Appendix D.i.c.</i>)		
	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>
Barnard	5.43	5.65
Prosper Valley School**	5.87	6.19
Kiillington	4.88	5.21
Woodstock	4.58	4.23
Reading	3.92	3.89

**In FY16 Bridgewater and Pomfret merged to become the Prosper Valley School

Table III.5 Student-Staff Ratio in WCSU Elementary Districts (source: <i>AOE Teacher, Staff, Student Ratios, Wednesday October 4, 2017. See Appendix D.i.b.</i>)		
	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>
Barnard	5.64	5.65
Prosper Valley School**	5.43	6.37
Kiillington	4.85	5.92
Woodstock	5.52	4.68
Reading	6.00	4.75

**In FY16 Bridgewater and Pomfret merged to become the Prosper Valley School

Our PreK program attracts students to our school, families to our town, and thus, also into the SU, including Woodstock Union Middle and High Schools. Barnard currently has the second largest number of students in the WCSU system, the highest number from the set of small towns surrounding Woodstock (Table III.4). Weakening Barnard Academy by restructuring, and undermining the appeal of Barnard as a choice for re-locating families, may result in a decrease in WCSU enrollment numbers. Barnard is attractive to families for a variety of reasons—Silver Lake and Silver Lake State Park, community and agricultural events including Feast and Field, and events hosted by BarnArts Center for the Arts—but having an excellent town school with a full-time PreK and an Afterschool Program is an important factor. Table III.6 shows WCSU town enrollments for K-6, as a percentage of each town’s population. This reflects the relative

number of families with children in each town. Barnard has the highest percentage of K-6 enrollment in relation to town population, demonstrating our continued attractiveness to families with school-age-children. The chart points to an underlying weakness of WCSU merger plan relative to the goal of increasing enrollment in the region. The restructuring of Barnard Academy appears extracts our students to feed a shrinking enrollment in the larger town nearby. This would ultimately make the entire region less competitive in terms of attracting families with young children. A stronger plan would not undermine a town school that is attractive to families to boost one that is less so, as this will have diminishing returns.

Table III.6 WCSU 2017 K-6 enrollments in relation to total town population*			
	<u>Enrollment**</u>	<u>Population***</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Barnard	64	947	6.7
Bridgewater	37	936	3.9
Killington	52	811	6.4
Pomfret	49	904	5.4
Woodstock	150	3048	4.9
Reading	39	667	5.8

* Tuitioned have been subtracted to analyze town students only. PreK not included due to variation in public and private programs (only Barnard and Reading have public PreK in district), and because data regarding town of residence of PreK students is limited.

** source: WCSU 2017-2013 enrollments (Appendix B.v: *WCSU Enrollment Report for Opening Day, August 30, 2017*)

*** source: 2010 U.S. Decennial Census Population Data (from U.S. Census.gov, retrieved August 23, 2017)

Table III.7 WCSU ADM by District								
	Barnard	Bridgewater	Pomfret	Killington	Woodstock	Reading	Pittsfield	Plymouth
FY15	114.10	82	105	92	331.79	88.5	79.4	52.7
FY16	117	71.41	109	100	331.83	82.35	71.1	46
FY17	110.9	66.65	104	94	326.1	78.88	66.5	45.68

In our SU, we currently have the second lowest per-pupil spending, the lowest student-to-teacher ratio, and the second lowest student-to-staff ratio. Board independence will allow us the flexibility to make financial and staffing decisions that maximize efficiencies within our school, while our relationship with the SU will continue to provide the platform for centralization of administrative or operational services that serve all districts efficiently and effectively.

B. Projected Tax Implications

Below is a FY23 Equalized Homestead Tax Rate projection created by the WCSU Act 46 Study Committee³¹ in January 2017 for WCSU districts as Stand Alone versus Merged. Many Barnard voters felt that the difference in projected Equalized Homestead Tax Rates for Barnard reflected in this was not significant enough to warrant the educational quality and (in)equity implications of the merger. Furthermore, this projection assumes the loss of Small School Grants in the Stand Alone column, which we argue will not be the case for Barnard. We believe we should retain our SSG under the new metrics due to our geographic isolation, academic excellence, and operational efficiency.

Additionally, in reviewing the data from the WCSU financial model, it is significant that the WCMUUSD tax relief plan was based entirely on the state tax incentives, not on budget reductions. Current WCMUUSD and WCSU budget conversations bear out this assumption. There is no effort towards reducing the annual budget. Any efficiencies identified are being reinvested. Some of the reinvestments are costs associated with unification, such as new administrative positions and increased Board stipends³². In the long term, beyond the 4-year tax incentives, Barnard would not receive any tax relief by unifying with Windsor Central.

Lastly, it is also important to note, as the Committee did, that the numbers (equalized pupil counts, educational spending, yield figures, etc.) used in the model are projections and not certain. As they note, their models were designed to predict trend lines not future tax rates. This chart--Model 3 (with Plymouth) from the WCSU Study Committee Final Plan--shows a projection of trend lines after incentives from the state have expired:

³¹ The WCSU was not available to provide more recent and targeted financial projections for us at no cost. Unlike the 706b Study Committee process, our AGS proposal process was not supported by AOE or VSBA grant funding.

³² The WCMUUSD Board will discuss--and the WCMUUSD Board Chair has advocated for--possible increased Board stipends in FY19 from \$5,050 in combined local stipends to a possible \$1000 per member for a total of \$18,000. The Barnard School Board does not receive stipends, and as an independent entity, our Board's stipend costs will remain \$0.

<i>Equalized Homestead Tax Rates - FY23</i>		
	Stand Alone	Merged
Reading	2.4854	1.9893
Plymouth	2.2419	1.9893
WES	2.1392	1.9893
Barnard	2.1119	1.9893
Bridgewater	2.0049	1.9893
Killington	2.0952	1.9893
Pomfret	2.0092	1.9893

SECTION IV: APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Our Decision-Making Process

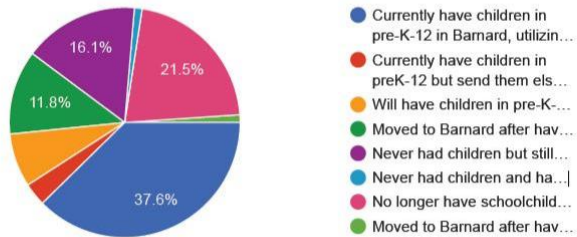
i. Survey

A survey of residents was conducted between April 27 and May 8, 2017:

Survey on the Future of Barnard Academy

94 responses

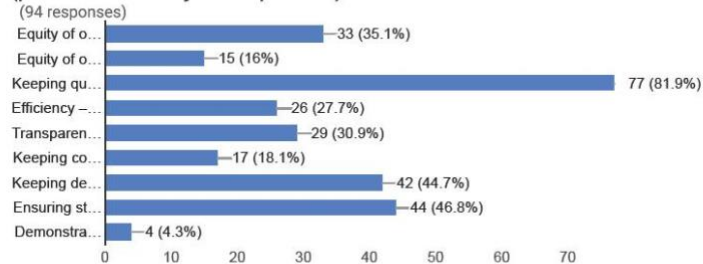
1. Which of the following describes you? (93 responses)



* Slide 1 (truncated) answers in full:

- Currently have children in pre-K-12 in Barnard, utilizing or plan on utilizing Barnard Academy & WUMS/HS/MS
- Currently have children in preK-12 but send them elsewhere for school or homeschool
- Will have children in pre-K-12 in the future
- Moved to Barnard after having children in school
- Never had children but still concerned about our school
- Never had children and have no concern about our school
- No longer have schoolchildren in Barnard but continue to care about opportunities for Barnard's children

2. What are the most important priorities regarding your local schools?
(please choose your top three)



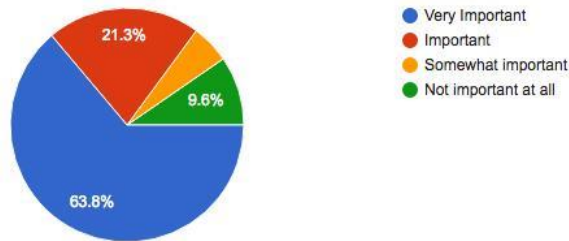
* Slide 2 (truncated) answers in full:

- Equity of opportunity for all students in Barnard
- Equity of opportunity for all students in Windsor Central
- Keeping quality of education high
- Efficiency – using what resources we have most effectively

- Transparent administration and budgeting
- Keeping cost of education low
- Keeping decision-making about schools at the local/town level
- Ensuring students have access to diverse programming
- Demonstrating academic success in standardized testing

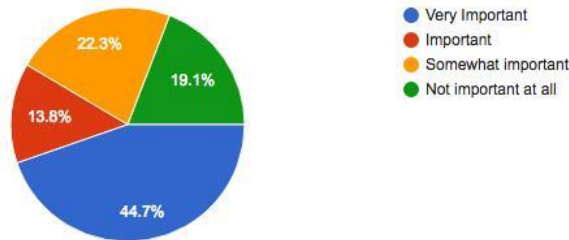
3. How important do you feel it is to keep a community school in Barnard?

94 responses



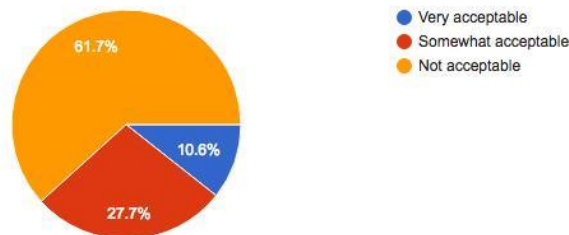
4. How important do you feel it is that the school remain pre-K-6?

94 responses



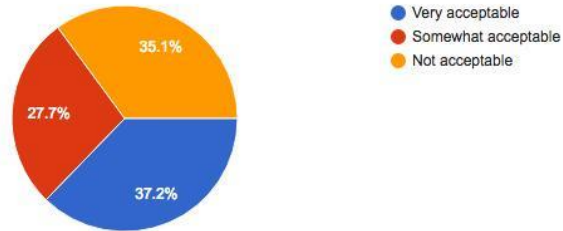
5. How acceptable to you is: Barnard Academy becoming PreK-2; 3-6 graders attend Prosper Valley or have controlled choice within our SU; 7-12 attend WUHS/MS?

94 responses



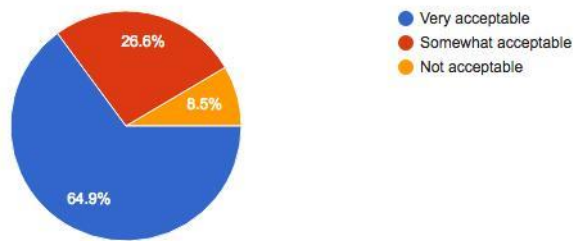
6. How acceptable to you is: Barnard Academy becomes PreK-4; 5-6 graders attend Prosper Valley or have controlled choice within our SU; 7-12 attend WUHS/MS (the WSCU Unified Union plan)?

94 responses



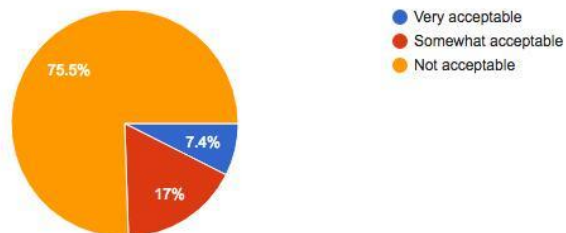
7. How acceptable to you is: Barnard Academy remains PreK-6 and 7-12 attend WUHS/MS?

94 responses



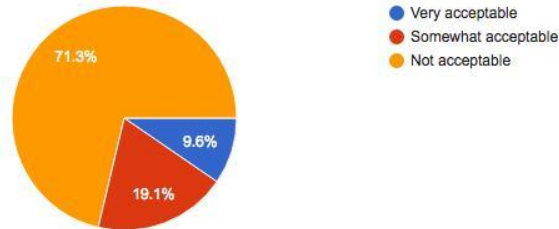
8. How acceptable to you is: Barnard Academy closes and kids have district choice pre-K-6, 7-12 attend WUHS/MS?

94 responses



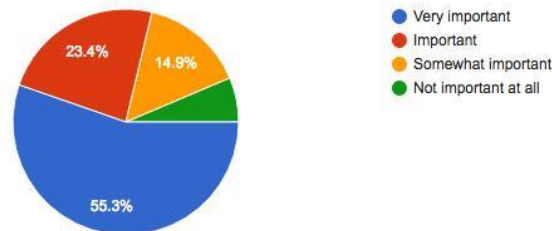
9. How acceptable to you is: Barnard Academy closes and Barnard becomes a choice school for all grades?

94 responses



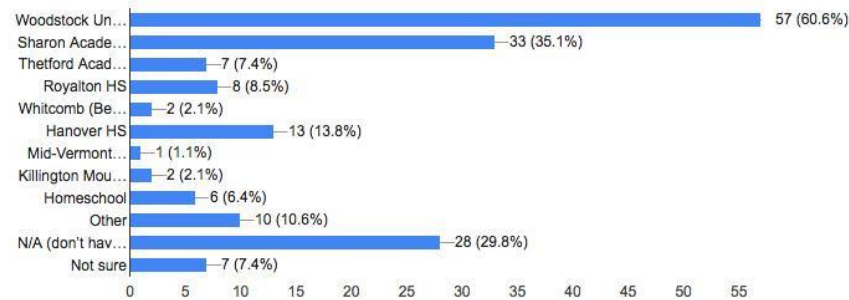
10. How important is continuing Barnard's long-standing relationship with WUMS/HS?

94 responses



11. If school Choice were an option for 7-12, what school would you choose for your kids (you may choose more than one)?

94 responses



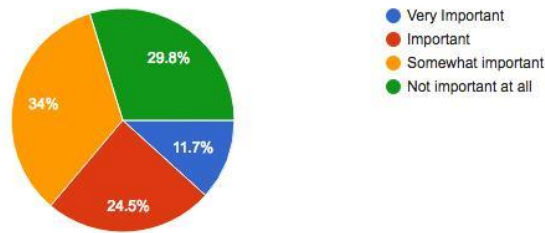
* Slide 11 (truncated) answers in full:

- Woodstock Union MS/HS
- Sharon Academy
- Thetford Academy
- Royalton HS
- Whitcomb (Bethel) HS

- Hanover HS
- Mid-Vermont Christian School
- Killington Mountain School
- Homeschool
- Other
- N/A (don't have children or school-age children)
- Not Sure

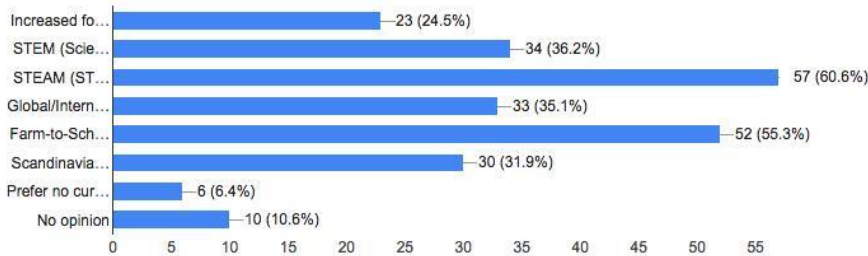
12. How important is it to you that Barnard Academy find a way to provide hot lunch to students, perhaps by working with a neighboring school?

94 responses



13. If Barnard Academy were to change curriculum to strengthen and specialize the school, which of the following curriculum change(s) would you support (choose as many as you like)?

94 responses



*** Slide 13 (truncated) answers in full:**

- Increased focus on the Arts
- STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Math)
- STEAM (STEM with Art)
- Global/International Studies
- Farm-to-School/Environmental
- Scandinavian model with block scheduling/more recess
- Prefer no curricular change
- No opinion

ii. Summary of Results

This email announcement was sent on the town listserv on May 26, 2017, summarizing the Board's conclusions:

Hello Barnard,

The Future of Barnard Academy survey results are in. We received 94 responses (similar to the average 13-14% that is common for online surveys). Some clear conclusions can be drawn from the responses:

- Barnard cares about quality of education: almost 82% chose this as a top priority.
- Access to diverse programming and keeping decision-making at a town level were each chosen as a top priority by almost half of the respondents.
- Barnard wants to keep the school open; only 8.9% thinks having the school here is not important.
- The long-standing MS/HS relationship with Woodstock MS/HS is important to the majority of people.

There are many more details to see, and we will have paper copies available at *the next Barnard Academy School Board Meeting: June 7th at 6pm at the school*. The Alternative Structures Committee will be giving a presentation on our findings since Town Meeting Day. This involves the recent evolution of Act 46 rules and legislation, and our current discoveries, activities and thinking about how best to achieve the goals that the town has identified for our school, including steps already taken by the School Board such as increasing Physical Education back to two days a week and thus meeting the State Education Quality Standards.

We invite Barnard to hear about these updates, to give feedback, and to help craft next steps.

Sincerely,

Pamela Fraser

Alternative Structures Committee of the Barnard School Board

iii. Committee/Board Meeting Dates. See www.wcsu.net for agendas and minutes.

a) Act 46 Task Force meeting dates:

June 25, 2015

July 13, 2015

July 23, 2015

October 5, 2015

b) Act 46 Study Committee meeting dates:

October 15, 2015

November 9, 2015

December 14, 2015

January 6, 2016

July 27, 2016

August 10, 2016

August 31, 2016

February 3, 2016
February 22, 2016
March 10, 2016
March 23, 2016
April 7, 2016
April 27, 2016
May 23, 2016
June 2, 2016
June 23, 2016

September 28, 2016
October 13, 2016
November 3, 2016
November 17, 2016
November 30, 2016
December 11, 2016
December 20, 2016
January 4, 2017
January 18, 2017

c) Post-merger vote Barnard School Board meeting dates:

March 14, 2017
April 4, 2017
May 2, 2017
June 7, 2017*
July 17, 2017
August 21, 2017
September 6, 2017

September 20, 2017*
October 4, 2017

November 1, 2017
December 6, 2017
December 18, 2017*

*AGS Presentations to Board and public

d) Barnard Academy Alternative Structure Committee meeting dates:

March 28, 2017
April 5, 2017
April 5, 2017
April 11, 2017**
April 17, 2017
April 25, 2017
May 10, 2017
May 16, 2017
May 24, 2017
May 30, 2017
June 7, 2017

June 14, 2017
July 12, 2017
July 25, 2017
August 9, 2017
August 23, 2017
September 6, 2017
September 6, 2017
September 27, 2017
October 11, 2017
October 25, 2017
November 8, 2017

** AOE presentation

e) WCSU Board post-merger meeting dates:

March 13, 2017
April 10, 2017
May 8, 2017
May 29, 2017

June 12, 2017
August 28, 2017
September 11, 2017
October 13, 2017

November 20, 2017

December 11, 2017

iv) Email Announcements (with flyer) regarding presentations to Barnard listserv from the WCSU Act 46 Study Committee, 7/8/16 (note: restructuring is mentioned in relation to *school management*, while Study Committee minutes show that restructuring Barnard students in grades 4-6 was a part of the merger plan at this time); and 10/6/16. The 10/6 email included a flyer which is inserted below.

[Barnard] Act 46 Forum - 7/18 in Barnard

1 message

Heather Little <hhlittle@gmail.com>
Reply-To: hhibbert@alumni.princeton.edu
To: barnard@lists.vitalcommunities.org

Fri, Jul 8, 2016 at 1:33 PM

The Barnard list is intended to be a discussion forum for topics specific to our town. Infrequent ads of an individual and local nature are acceptable but business ads should be posted on uppervalley@lists.vitalcommunities.org or on Ebay or Craigslist. Please help us keep this list consistent with those principles.

The Barnard School Board and Act 46 Study Committee will be hosting a discussion on Act 46 at the Barnard Town Hall at 6:00 pm on July 18th.

Please join us to learn more about Act 46 and the future of schools in our district. How will Act 46 affect the decisions we make about education within our district? We will discuss the potential educational opportunities and inherent challenges in restructuring of school management including next steps. Come get informed and join the discussion!

Heather Little
4107 VT Rt. 12
Woodstock, VT 05091

[Barnard] The future of education in Barnard - IMPORTANT! - Oct. 26th Town Forum

3 messages

Heather Little <hhlittle@gmail.com>
Reply-To: hhlittle@gmail.com
To: barnard@lists.vitalcommunities.org

Thu, Oct 6, 2016 at 9:44 PM

The Barnard list is intended to be a discussion forum for topics specific to our town. Infrequent ads of an individual and local nature are acceptable but business ads should be posted on uppervalley@lists.vitalcommunities.org or on Ebay or Craigslist. Please help us keep this list consistent with those principles.

Hello,

The Barnard school board urges you to read the attached flyer which is related to the future of education in our small town of Barnard and in the Windsor Central Supervisory Union. This is relevant to ALL Barnard residents, whether you have school-aged children or not. We also urge you to attend the public forum to discuss this issue (Act 46) on Oct. 26th at 7 pm at the Barnard Town Hall. At that time, you will learn more and have a chance to provide your thoughts and feedback.

Regards,
Heather Little

The Future of Our School and Education in our District

from your local school board

Did you know?

Our town is a member of an Act 46 Study Committee, which is charged by statute to study and present a report on potential school district consolidation here in Windsor Central Supervisory Union.

As a result, in March 2017 at Town Meeting, you may be asked to vote by Australian ballot on Articles of Agreement that would create a new unified union (PreK – 12th grade) school district, as well as, elect individuals who would represent our town on that new school board. This vote will directly affect our school, the future of our children’s elementary education, our board, and our school budget!

If our town votes YES, it will join a new unified school district that would begin operation in July of 2018 with other towns in our Supervisory Union that also vote YES, creating a single unified board & one budget for those towns. A Yes vote would mean all schools in the new district would keep their existing State funding, including small schools grants, and obtain additional State tax incentives. One board and one budget could mean increasing opportunities for students by creatively restructuring the delivery of our schools existing educational programs in a more efficient and educationally effective manner.

If our town votes NO, our school board and budget process will remain as it is until November 2018 when the State puts forth a statewide redistricting plan to go into effect by July 2019. A NO vote would mean our school might lose any small school’s grant that it currently receives and will not be eligible for tax incentives from the State. At this time, we do not know what the final statewide redistricting plan will dictate.

Please get informed! Keep reading (turn over)!

Local Forums are your chance to learn more and get involved!
Please attend any forum!

Bridgewater: 10/11/16 7 pm at The Grange; Pomfret: 10/20/16 7 pm at TPVS; Killington: 10/24/16 7 pm at KES; Barnard: 10/26/16 7 pm at Town Hall; Woodstock: 11/9/16 5:30 pm at WUHSMS; Reading 11/15/16 6 pm at RES

Our Schools.... Your Child's Education

- In 2015, the Vermont legislature passed Act 46 which declares that the "State shall provide educational opportunities through sustainable governance structures by July 2019."
- Act 46 encourages the districts that make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union (WCSU) to explore the opportunities and challenges of unifying into a single PreK-12th district with one board and one budget that would serve Barnard, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Killington, Reading, and Woodstock prior to the state developing its own redistricting plan.
- The Act 46 Study Committee (consisting of board members and citizens from each town) meets publicly twice per month, and is developing **Principles for Unification and Articles of Agreement** that will specify, among other important issues, how representation on the new unified board will be allocated.
- The Committee is working to address the legal requirements of Act 46 and is seeking new ways of delivering a greater variety of high quality, educational opportunities to every student in the current WCSU. A unified district will likely mean the restructuring of some schools and may add some school "choice" options for Grades K-6. Restructuring does not mean closing any school within the next 4 years, however, it could mean the closing of some grades in some schools by July 2018.

Page 2

v) Act 46 Study Committee Handout "WCSU 'SPECIALS' FTE by Town FY17 with Standards", July 18, 2016

WCSU Specials' FTE by Town FY17

Special	Barnard N=71	Killington N=92	Prosper Valley N=82	Reading N=54	Woodstock N= 172	VT AOE School Quality Standard
Art	.20	.20	.40	.20	.60	Each elementary school offering education in grades K-6 shall provide students with programs at least twice weekly, or the equivalent thereof, in both the arts and physical education.
Music	.20	.20	.35	.20	.70	Each elementary school offering education in grades K-6 shall provide students with programs at least twice weekly, or the equivalent thereof, in both the arts and physical education.
PE	.20	.40	.60	.20	1.0	Each school shall provide students in grades K-8 with at least two physical education classes per week. Each school shall offer options for students in grades K-12 to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity within or outside of the school day. Physical activity may include recess and movement built into the curriculum, but does not replace physical education classes.
Library/ Technology	.40	.40	(Lib.) .20 (Tech.) .20	N/A	.60	The services of a library-media specialist shall be available to students. Schools with over 300 students shall have at least one full-time library-media specialist and sufficient additional staff to carry out the program. Schools with fewer than 300 students shall employ a library-media specialist in at least an approximate proportion of the number of students in the school to 300.

vi. WCSU “Specials Data 2016,” comparison of Unified Arts and PE hours across SU schools

Specials data.2016.xlsx Open with Microsoft Excel

SCHOOL	ART	MUSIC	PHYS. ED.	FOREIGN LANGUAGE	LIBRARY/ED. MEDIA
BARNARD	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 30 minutes 2 days/wk
	Gr. 1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	Gr.1-2= 60 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.3-6= 50 minutes 1 day/wk	Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 2 days/wk
KILLINGTON	K/1= 40 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk	45 minutes 2 days/wk	K-2= 30 minutes 1 day/wk	45 minutes 1 day/wk
	Gr.2-6= 45 minutes 1 day/wk	Gr.1-6= 40-45 minutes 1 day/wk		Gr.3-6= 45 minutes 1 day/wk	
PROSPER VALLEY	K/1= 45 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.2= 60 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.3-6= 45 minutes 2 days/wk	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 45 minutes 1 day/wk	K-6= 45 minutes 2 days/wk	K-2= 30 minutes 2 days/wk Gr.3-6= 45 minutes 2 days/wk	Library: K-6= 35 minutes 1 day/wk Tech: K-3= 40 minutes 1 day/wk Tech: Gr.4-6= 45 minutes 1 day/wk
READING	K= 45 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 45 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 45 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	K-1= 30 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 45 minutes 1 day/wk	N/A
WOODSTOCK	K= 40 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 60 minutes 1 day/wk	K= 30 minutes 1 day/wk Gr.1-6= 40 minutes 1 day/wk	K-6= 40 minutes 2 days/wk	K= 20 minutes 2 days/wk Gr.1-6= 40 minutes 2 days/wk	K-6= 40 minutes 1 day every other wk (alternates weeks with STEM)

vii. Community Outreach/Forums in Barnard (for all but the July 18, 2016 Forum, see www.cnuz.tv for video of the event)

- WSCU Act 46 Study Committee Forum, July 18, 2016
- WSCU Act 46 Study Committee Forum, October 26, 2016
- Act 46 Community Forum Committee Forum, December 19, 2016; moderated by Rep. Teo Zagar, with presentations by Sen. Dick McCormack, Act 46 Study Committee Member Heather Little, and community member Bryce Sammel; attended by Sen. Allison Clarkson, Rep. Sue Buchholz, and Rep. Charlie Kimball
- Act 46 Community Forum Committee Forum, January 30, 2017
- Alternative Structure Committee/Special Meeting of the Barnard School Board (Donna Russo Savage and Brad James of the Vermont Agency of Education Presentation), April 4, 2017
- Alternative Structure Committee/Special Meeting of the Barnard School Board (AGS Report of Town Survey and Governance Options), June 7, 2017 see <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByqPomIIvJK7a1BSaHNhR19RYXM/view>

- Alternative Structure Committee Report to the Barnard School Board, September 26, 2017

viii. Website

The Alternative Structures Committee created www.sustainingbarnardacademy.org in April 2017 to keep community apprised of activities.

ix. Communication with Other SU districts:

- a) Pre-merger vote communication can be seen in WCSU Act 46 Study Committee 2015-2017 meeting minutes at wcsu.net. Post-merger vote communication--both Barnard School Board Meeting minutes and Barnard Academy Alternative Structure Committee Meeting Minutes can be see at wcsu.net as well.
- b) July 2017 email correspondence between Barnard Academy and Reading Elementary Board Chairs Andrew Cole and Justin Sluka, and WSCU Board members (WCMUUSD Board was not yet ratified) regarding renegotiation of Articles of Agreement, forwarded to BA AGS Committee members as meeting agenda item:

July 17, 2017

To: Jennifer Iannantuoni, Chair, Killington Elementary School; Seth Shaw, Chair, The Prosper Valley School; Jessica Stout, Chair, Woodstock Elementary School

As you are well aware, voters in Reading and Barnard have yet to approve the merger plan put forward by the Act 46 706b Study Committee. Both Towns are continually discussing the question and actively researching options. Given a series of reconsideration votes - Reading's second reconsideration vote is scheduled for July 25th - Reading voters are reviewing the issue with a bit more urgency. The final planned community forum is scheduled for this Wednesday, July 19th.

The Boards and community members in Reading and Barnard have identified three Articles of Agreement that cause the greatest concern - Article 8 regarding board representation, Article 13 regarding school closure, and Article 15 regarding campus restructuring. Modifying these three Articles more likely than not would lead to affirmative votes in each Town to join the Union.

Article 8. We understand that several Towns voted on the plan under the mistaken belief that representation proportional to population is the only legally accepted model for the board composition. This is simply untrue. The State Board of Education has approved plans with a "hybrid model" of representation where each Town is equally represented in number and weight of vote.

Article 13. We have heard significant concern regarding the closure of small schools. We would like to discuss a more stringent standard for closing campuses in the Union.

Article 15. Equally concerning in our Towns is the restructuring of campuses to move Grades 5 and 6 out of Reading and Barnard. We would like to discuss board members' current positions regarding whether the efficacy of our consolidated board, in meeting the goals of Act 46, rests upon restructuring some of the district schools within our SU—a contention that is foundational to the current plan.

As a starting point for these discussions, we have enclosed a first draft of these revised Articles. Because Reading meets for a community forum on July 19th prior to the July 25th reconsideration vote, we would appreciate that you forward this message to relevant members of your respective board(s)—present and future—to help inform your response, and to provide a brief reply by email simply indicating whether you are willing to further

discuss these Articles. Your reaction to this request prior to Reading's community forum on Wednesday, July 19th, will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Justin Sluka, Chair, Reading Elementary School

Andy Cole, Chair, Barnard Academy

Cc. Mary Beth Banios

Fwd: TPVS

1 message

ferdinand93@aol.com <ferdinand93@aol.com>
To: helloworld@gmail.com

Tue, Sep 19, 2017 at 2:15 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Seth Shaw <west.hahs@gmail.com>

To: Justin Sluka <justin.sluka@gmail.com>; jiannantuoni <jiannantuoni@wcsu.net>; jstout <jstout@wcsu.net>

Cc: Gregg, Joshua (GE Aviation, US) (GE Aviation, US) <joshua.gregg@ge.com>; Jody Eaton <soulshinetraining@gmail.com>; Justin Shipman <jshipman.tgroupusa@gmail.com>; Patricia Kuzmickas <pakdvm@aol.com>; Seth Westbrook <sethwestbro@gmail.com>; ferdinand93 <ferdinand93@aol.com>; mbanios <mbanios@wcsu.net>

Sent: Mon, Jul 17, 2017 2:17 pm

Subject: Re:

Justin -

Below is the response from the Prosper Board:

To begin with, we see a fundamental philosophical difference between the unified district and the non-member districts in believing smaller, independent districts are better at meeting students' needs than a common K-12 system that emphasizes sustainability and student outcomes. Furthermore, there is the reality that every district was given ample time to collectively draft the existing articles prior to the March vote. The divide that exists now between the non member districts and the new modified union district is not unlike the divide that existed prior to the vote in March. We believe that it would be unfair to the newly formed district members to allow for inbound negotiation from prospective districts. There are in fact terms within the existing articles that allow for these articles to be amended; however, it is the sole prerogative of this new modified unified union board to make those changes to the articles.

Having said that, I personally understand the current thought process in Reading and in Barnard as regards the elementary schools in those two towns. You've heard me tell the Bridgewater narrative more often than you care to hear... but that particular community was in a similar conversation a decade ago. It took several years of dialogue to arrive at the position we did. Every community must take their time with the narrative... and to the extent that Bridgewater and Pomfret can help Reading and Barnard, we will do what little we can in light of the current circumstances. And so, we offer these thoughts:

We could re-visit board structure. Proportionality is the State law, so an at-large model where all towns vote on each others' candidates is an option, but this was rejected in the public forums leading up to the final plan. We would absolutely support Reading's proposal, but we're not sure the voters would.

Article 15 empowers the unified Board to develop a plan for sustainable campus and classroom configurations. But Article 14 directs the Board to develop a policy to offer intra-district choice. We understand there's a perception that if Barnard and Reading joined, they would immediately be re-structured. This should not happen until the element of choice is fully explored and implemented, otherwise the Board might be re-structuring the wrong classrooms.

Seth

Fwd: Woodstock response

2 messages

ferdinand93@aol.com <ferdinand93@aol.com>

Thu, Jul 20, 2017 at 12:45 PM

To: carinewing@yahoo.com, helloworldpamela@gmail.com, ltreash@hotmail.com, ijohnson@wcsu.net

-----Original Message-----

From: Jessica Stout <jstout@wcsu.net>

To: Justin Sluka <justin.sluka@gmail.com>

Cc: Seth Shaw <west.hahs@gmail.com>; jiannantuoni <jiannantuoni@wcsu.net>; ferdinand93 <ferdinand93@aol.com>; mbanios <mbanios@wcsu.net>; Malena Agin <magin@wcsu.net>; paige <paige@paigehillerphotography.com>

Sent: Tue, Jul 18, 2017 9:57 pm

Subject: Re:

Hi Justin,

Thank you for your letter, which the WES board has now had a chance to review. While I can say that there is a desire for cooperative problem-solving in general, we all felt that we are not in a position, at this juncture, to weigh in any further about the Articles. We need to respect the voters in our town, and we need to respect the process by which the new unified board now comes together to make decisions.

Good luck as you proceed!

Best,

Jess

On Mon, Jul 17, 2017 at 8:59 AM, Justin Sluka <justin.sluka@gmail.com> wrote:

Jennifer, Seth, Jessica:

Thank you for your attention to the attached letter.

Justin & Andy

Fwd: Killington response

1 message

ferdinand93@aol.com <ferdinand93@aol.com>

Thu, Jul 20, 2017 at 12:44 PM

To: ijohnson@wcsu.net, carinewing@yahoo.com, ltreash@hotmail.com, hellopamela@gmail.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Jennifer Iannantuoni <jiannantuoni@wcsu.net>

To: Justin Sluka <justin.sluka@gmail.com>

Cc: Seth Shaw <west.hahs@gmail.com>; jstout <jstout@wcsu.net>; ferdinand93 <ferdinand93@aol.com>; mbanios <mbanios@wcsu.net>; Laura McKenna <sunup@vermontel.net>; Walter Findeisen <findeisen@vermontel.net>; Jim Haff <keenanhaff@gmail.com>; theriveras <theriveras@vermontel.net>; Paige Hiller <philler@wcsu.net>

Sent: Tue, Jul 18, 2017 10:40 pm

Subject: Re:

Justin and Andy,

Thank you for reaching out. Please know that in Killington we want to work together toward the goal of having both Barnard and Reading as members of the newly formed Act 46 board. We absolutely believe that both towns belong in our SU and that the students from Barnard and Reading are essential to the growth of our community and our common schools.

I appreciate the thoughtful consideration that went into the proposed draft articles. Having sat through the 18 months of meetings and having deliberated these exact issues, I understand their complexities as they relate to each specific town. I DO believe there is room for further discussion and for movement from the original articles but I don't think we can have that discussion until the full Act 46 board meets. The voters of the five towns have voted on the agreed upon articles. They voted in school board members to this new board who they have trusted to act on their behalf. This new board needs to discuss and debate these issues. I want both Barnard and Reading to be a part of this new board so that we start this process together.

Thank you for your efforts and please understand my support for the general concepts but my inability to act before the new board meets.

Regards, Jennifer

On Mon, Jul 17, 2017 at 8:59 AM, Justin Sluka <justin.sluka@gmail.com> wrote:

Jennifer, Seth, Jessica:

Thank you for your attention to the attached letter.

Justin & Andy

x. Communication with State Board of Education regarding Geographic Isolation

September

4 messages

Carin Park <cpark@wcsu.net>

Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 11:12 AM

To: Krista.Huling@vermont.gov, william.mathis@vermont.gov, john.carroll@vermont.gov, rainbow.chen@vermont.gov, bonnie.johnson-aten@vermont.gov, john.okeefe@vermont.gov, peter.peltz@vermont.gov, mark.perrin@vermont.gov, connor.solimano@vermont.gov, stacy.weinberger@vermont.gov, Rebecca.Holcombe@vermont.gov

September 26, 2017

To the State Board of Education,

We are writing in response to the September 20th Agency of Education memo to Chair Krista Huling and Members of the State Board of Education from Brad James and Donna Russo-Savage, *Small School Support Grants & Geographic Isolation*, concerning the new list of Geographically Isolated school districts that your Board will be releasing on September 30, 2017 and the new metrics your Board will be releasing in July 2018. We have questions regarding your September 25, 2017 memo *List Required by 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 49, Sec. 9 – Geographic Isolation; Small Schools Grants*. (Due to the time sensitive nature of our query, we are submitting this letter electronically. A physical copy with signatures will follow.)

We are concerned about Geographic Isolation criteria changes as described in the AOE memo. The way that travel times between towns is discussed does not correspond to actual bus travel in several ways. The actual travel time for students on a bus is much longer than the AOE estimate due to multiple pick-ups on a route, and due to the fact that the AOE calculates distance from school to school. And of course, students live throughout the town, many with a fifteen minute drive just to get to the Barnard Academy. Furthermore, the terrain in our area greatly influences travel times under less than optimum weather conditions. At a 1000' higher elevation than Woodstock Elementary School (the closest school with capacity), Barnard is known for being in its own snow belt and having treacherous roads in the winter. The route to Woodstock passes through "The Ledges," a steep and winding stretch of road that is often icy and requires very slow travel.

Safe travel times between Barnard and Woodstock are regularly doubled in the winter and almost always increased. Most nights Barnard gets "nuisance" snow dustings which require slower speeds in the mornings, December to March. We are concerned that the AOE memo does not convey actualities about bus travel to the closest school with capacity in our area. The actual time on the bus—which impacts children's sleep and home time—must be more accurately determined and considered.

Additionally, the argument in Section IV of the memo—that the distance some elementary students may travel to reach a school of their choice is a reasonable indicator of 'how far is too far' -- is weak for several reasons. First and foremost, there is a real difference between a choice and a State-imposed decision. Within a choice scenario, there are often other factors -- including quality of education, and convenience in coordinating with a caregivers' commuting route -- that can make the choice to attend a more distant school more favorable, despite a longer travel time. Also, in choice scenarios, students would be traveling with parents or caregivers in cars from their homes directly to schools of their choice without the added time of making stops on a bus routes. The fact that families choose to travel more than the 10-mile or 15-minute cutoff point does not imply that they would choose to send their children on a bus route with a significantly increased travel time to school. Furthermore, time on a bus is a different type of experience than in a car, which is often a family experience that can be valuable in itself. Each of these factors undermines the validity of the comparison for the purposes of determining geographic isolation of public elementary schools.

Finally, we would like to receive some clarity regarding your September 25, 2017 memo regarding the list of geographically isolated districts to be made available by September 30, 2017, as required by Act 49. Your Board indicates that the "districts included on the list resulting from the September 20 decision are an indication of districts that are likely to be considered GI when, beginning in FY20, the SBE applies those yet-to-be created metrics." The requirement of Act 49 is that "on or before September 30, 2017, the State Board shall publish a list of districts that it determines to be geographically isolated." The preliminary determination for GI includes those schools for which travel time to the next school exceeds 15 minutes. If these schools are determined to be geographically isolated and yet the metrics are not yet created, this would imply that the metrics you are developing will necessarily include these districts but may be broader than the preliminary determination. Common sense would suggest that there are other factors to consider that

would be relevant to a decision regarding any particular district's isolation, in particular road and weather conditions, that may result in the lengthening of this list. We request that the SBE give an indication as to what other factors they may consider in developing the GI metrics, in order to more fully flesh out the determination of geographically isolated districts as required by Act 49.

Thank you,

Andrew Cole, Carin Ewing Park, Bryce Sammel

Barnard School Board

Barnard, Vermont

APPENDIX B – Student Enrollment and Population Data

i. Enrollment, ADM, and Phantom Pupils at Barnard Academy (PreK-6) for past 5 years

Barnard Academy	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Enrollment (opening day)*	62	70	75	69	81
ADM**	60	66.1	71	68.9	76
ADM by grade: EEE, PreK, F/T K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**	0, 9, 7, 8, 3, 8, 9, 13, 3	0, 9.6, 7, 10, 8, 3, 9, 9, 10.5	0, 12, 10, 9, 10, 9, 5, 8, 8	0, 18, 4, 9, 9.9, 8, 7, 5, 8	0, 14, 11, 5, 9, 10, 14, 7, 6
Phantom Pupils**	(0.01)	1.71	1.75	-	-

* Source: WCSU

** Source: AOE

ii. Tables B.1-B.6: WCSU school enrollments 2007-2017 (source: WCSU)

Dark colors on each graph designate inclusion of PreK enrollment; marked as outsourced or in-house. Only Barnard and Reading district schools have in-house PreK programs that offer publicly-funded and curriculum-aligned programs that go beyond the state mandated ten hours. Woodstock and Killington house externally-run PreK programs. Bridgewater and Pomfret tables show enrollment for PreK students at the Woodstock, Killington, Reading, or Barnard programs.

Table B.1: Barnard Acad. enrollment 2007-2017

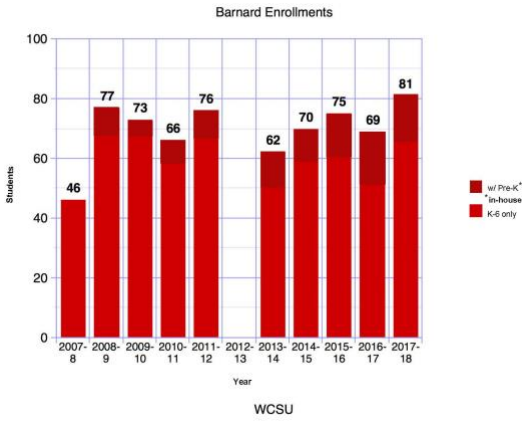


Table B.4: KES Elementary enrollment 2007-2017

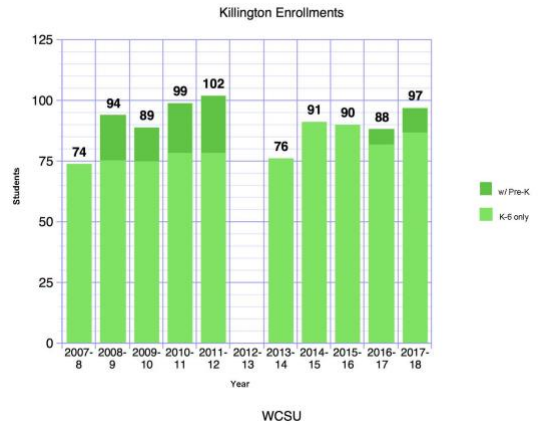


Table B.2: Bridgewater enrollment 2007-2017

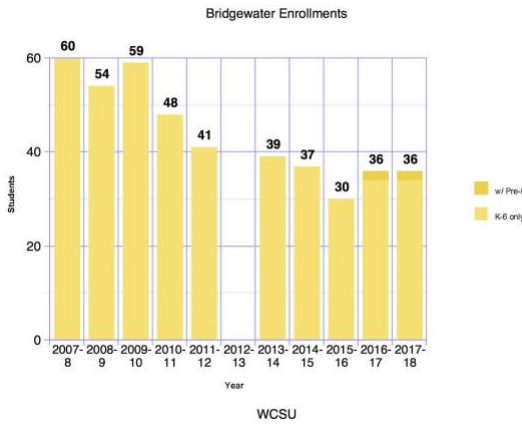


Table B.5: RES enrollment 2007-2017

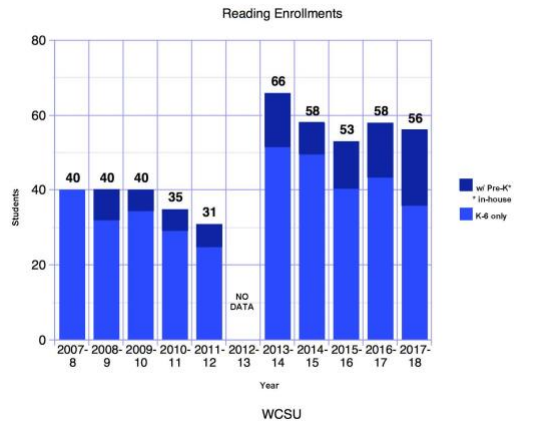


Table B.3: Pomfret enrollment 2007-2017

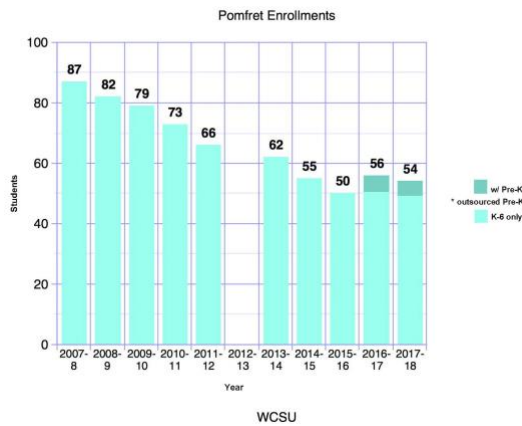
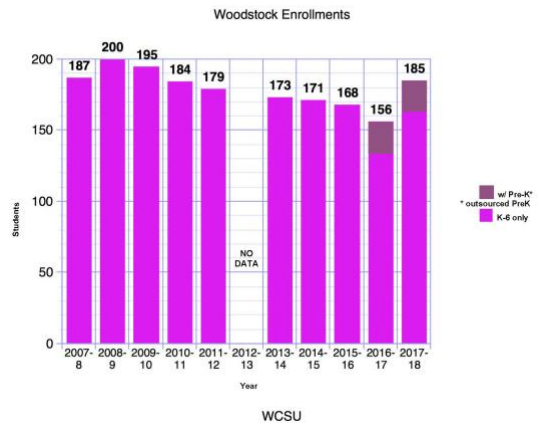


Table B.6: WES enrollment 2007-2017



iii. Enrollment for Woodstock Middle School/High School (7-12) for 5 years

Woodstock MS/HS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Enrollment	525	497	511	604	525

* Source: WCSU 2017-2013 Enrollments

iv. 2017-18 Enrollment in WCSU

WCSU DIstrict K-12 w/ Tuition: 924

WCSU DIstrict K-12 w/out Tuition: 772

WCSU District PreK-12 w/ Tuition: 1000

WCSU District PreK-12 w/out Tuition: 846

* Source: WCSU 2017-2013 Enrollments (see below)

v. WSCU Enrollment Report for Opening Day, August 30, 2017

Windsor Central Supervisory Union													
Enrollment Report for Opening Day: August 30, 2017													
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL K-6	TOTAL PreK-6	TUITION PreK	TUITION K-6	
Barnard	16	13	5	9	11	14	7	6	65	81	2	1	
Killington	11	13	5	13	17	10	11	17	86	97		34	
Prosper Valley- Bridgewater	2	9	6	3	6	4	6	6	40	42		3	
Prosper Valley- Pomfret	5	3	9	6	7	8	7	9	49	54		0	
Rending	19	7	5	7	4	6	6	4	39	58			
Woodstock	23	19	28	20	15	22	26	32	162	185		13	
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	76	64	58	58	60	64	63	74	441	517	2	51	
DISTRICT STUDENTS AT WUHSMS:													
TOWN:	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total Secondary	Total K-12					
Barnard	6	11	9	6	6	5	43	108					
Bridgewater	7	6	9	2	9	4	37	77					
Killington	8	10	6	7	5	4	40	126					
Pomfret	4	6	14	8	8	9	49	98					
Rending	3	4	6	6	3	6	28	67					
Woodstock	26	30	33	31	30	28	178	340					
	54	67	77	60	61	56	375	816					
	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL	TOTAL TUITION					
Woodstock Union Middle School	60	84					144	23					
Woodstock Union High School			95	88	75	74	332	78					
SUBTOTAL SECONDARY	60	84	95	88	75	74	476	101					
School Choice			2	3	0	2	7						
Foreign Exchange			0	0	0	0	0						
GRAND TOTAL SECONDARY	60	84	97	91	75	76	483						
	MS GRAND TOTAL			HS GRAND TOTAL									
	144			339									
WCSU DISTRICT K-12 TOTAL (w/tuition)	924												
WCSU DISTRICT K-12 TOTAL (w/o tuition)	772												
	TUITION TOTAL K-12						152						
WCSU DISTRICT PreK-12 TOTAL (w/tuition)	1000												
WCSU DISTRICT PreK-12 TOTAL (w/o tuition)	846												
	TUITION TOTAL PreK-12						154						

vi. Percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

- Note Barnard does not have a 5-Day Lunch Program, but a Free or Reduced-Price Milk-and-Juice program.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Barnard	19%	21%	23%	19%	4.1%***
WCSU	25%	25%	27%	26%	Not available
State	41%	39%	38%	39%	Not available

* Source: AOE

* Source: Barnard Academy

vii. Students receiving or eligible for Special Education Services*

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Barnard	11.3	13.2	11.4	7.9	4 (2 pending)
WCSU	14.9	14.2	14.5	13.6	Not available

* Source: WCSU

viii. Number of students receiving Section 504 Accommodations

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Barnard	1	1	1	1	2
WCSU	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available

ix. Percentage of students receiving Support Services

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Barnard	Not available	26%	20%	11.5%	Pending
WCSU	Not available	25%	30%	Not available	Not available

x. Students for whom English is not the primary language***

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Barnard	0	0	0	0	4

*** Source: Barnard Academy

APPENDIX C – School Learning Environment

i. Elementary Program Information *

- Subjects offered: Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Music, Art, Foreign Language (Spanish), Library, Technology, Physical Education, Health, Guidance meeting the Vermont Educational Quality Standards, CCSS, and NGSS
- Differentiated Instruction: Teachers use assessment data and evidence of individual student progress to implement differentiated instruction to meet students where they are, thereby providing learning options and sufficient levels of challenge for each child
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports: All students' academic needs are equitably addressed through intervention plans based on regular assessment of individual student progress towards successfully meeting or exceeding CCSS standards
- Merged classrooms/ Multi-age Learning: Teachers and administrators identify and create opportunities for multi-age learning both within the school and the broader Barnard community. Examples include appropriate multi-age classrooms, reading buddies, big pal/little pal, and mentoring
- Curriculum written, delivered, and aligned with Common Core Math and Language Arts.
- In accord with Next Generation Science Standards, STEM programs development as manifest in the Montshire Museum Partnership In 2016-17, Outdoor Place-based learning, Forest Fridays, and the technology component of Computer classes, including Scratch programming
- Inquiry-based, conceptual teaching, using the Core Knowledge Program
- Interdisciplinary teaching
- Math and Literacy interventions incorporated into weekly schedule
- Unified Arts integrated into curriculum and uses outstanding local resources
- Global Studies Programming established in 2017

* 7-12 Program information is not included in this proposal since it will be the same--at Woodstock Union-- regardless of outcome of elementary school governance.

ii. Learning Environment and Educational Opportunities

a. Early Education:

- Leaders in the SU in developing a four-star STARS PreK program
- Leaders in funding Unified Arts coursework for PreK students (Library, Art, Music, & PE)

b. Special Education Services:

- WCSU is responsible for receiving and disbursing all federal funds
- Barnard Academy follows the WCSU tiered system of support

- Over the past decade, Barnard Academy has had the lowest or second-lowest percentage of Special Education students in WCSU, except for 2014-15 when it had the third lowest percentage³³

c. Staffing

- Committed, licensed, qualified staffing, with strong systems of oversight, support, and professional development
- Follows State recommendations for 0-20 students per teacher in K-3, and 0-25 students per teacher for 4-6
- Curricula-coordination within the district and supervisory union

d. Extracurricular and Afterschool Programming:

- Special cultural literary programming such as the Artist-in-Residence program, supported by local community arts organization BarnArts, the Barnard Education Fund, and the Vermont Council for the Arts
- Friday Ski Program for eight weeks every winter, with alternative options for students who do not wish to or are not able to ski. In the past, these have included ice skating, snowshoeing and art classes. The BEES pay for students who cannot afford the \$75 ski fee or ski rental, so that all students who wish to participate can.
- After School Program for all grade levels, with elective classes such as Lego Robotics, Advanced Robotics, Aquaponics, Digital Movie Making, & Carpentry, Martial Arts, Yoga, Experimental Science, Natural Science, Drumming classes and Engineering challenges. Financial Aid is available for qualifying students

e. Community and Volunteerism

- High-level of volunteerism and community-involvement create enhanced student opportunities, supplies and services. The Barnard Educational Fund (BEF), the parent-teacher organization the Barnard Educational Endeavor (the BEES), and BarnArts Arts Center for the Arts support enrichment opportunities in the form of cultural activities and artist-in-residence programs, technology, support for families in need (After School Program assistance, food, and recreation), in-class school supplies, and support events such as Annual Foliage Breakfast, Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon, Halloween Party, Holiday Craft Fair, Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, Back-to-School Coffee Social, and Back-to-School Picnic
- The Barnard Buddy Program pairs adult mentors with children-at-risk
- Partnership with Woodstock High School Horticulture class helped to clear trail and construct trail steps
- Volunteers from the community built a bridge which was lost during Hurricane Irene

³³ Windsor Central Supervisory Union #51 Annual Special Education Comparisons Identified Special Education Students as of December 1, 2016, page 84, Barnard Town Report, 2017

- Volunteers have helped garden, maintain a Nature Trail and Bee Path, and create a new play space for the younger students close to PreK and K classrooms incorporating natural play elements i.e. a climbing tree, stepping logs, sensory tables, etc.]
- Annual Foliage Breakfast and Thanksgiving Luncheons serve and honor townspeople.
- Volunteers run the annual Holiday Workshop, opening day Welcome Breakfast, Back to School Potluck, Field Day luncheon, and Teacher Appreciation Luncheon and gifts

f. Enrichment

- Field trips to Community Arts Center Pentangle in Woodstock, the 5th and 6th grade Hood Museum program at Dartmouth, and Montshire Science Program in Norwich
- Annual field trips with overnight stays bi-annually include Odiorne Point Ocean learning center, Sturbridge Village, Fairbanks Museum, Boston Science Museum, Boston Aquarium, and Mystic Seaport Village
- Week-long Nature’s Classroom trip each Spring for 6th Grade in coordination with other 6th Grades in the SU

iii. Continuous Improvement Plan Goals 2018-2020

Barnard Academy

Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-2020

-action plans are living documents that are continually renewed-

School Name: Barnard Academy	Title I Schoolwide (Y/N): N	Supervisory Union: Windsor Central
Superintendent: Mary Beth Banios	SU Phone: 802-457-1213	Superintendent Email: mbanios@wcsu.net
Principal: Hannah Thein	School Phone: 802-234-9763	Principal Email: hthein@wcsu.net

Mission Statement

The mission of Barnard Academy is to create a safe and supportive environment where all children are expected to:

- Achieve their fullest potential
- Communicate effectively
- Reason critically
- Think creatively
- Work cooperatively
- Value differences in others
- Become positive, contributing, and informed global citizens

Guiding Principles

- We believe every child has valuable gifts and talents to share with the world community. We commit to helping each child discover how he or she best learns and to find strengths and passion(s).
- We believe teaching and learning incorporate respect, honesty, diligence, transparency, and perseverance.
- We believe that every child has gifts and talents that are valuable and will contribute to world community.
- We believe the best approaches to teaching and learning incorporate respect, honesty, diligence, transparency, and perseverance.
- We believe in giving children opportunities to develop their multiple intelligences.
- Respectfully utilizing all the resources available to us will prepare our students to be healthy, contributing, global citizens.
- We believe in providing daily outdoor physical movement, opportunities for students to develop stamina, and fully engaging students mind, body, and heart.

Goal Number: #1 Place-Based Education	Statement of Goal: Develop and Implement a Place-Based Education framework using the social, cultural, and natural environment in which our students live as an inquiry-based learning environment to gain knowledge and skills across the curriculum, including reading performance.
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Inquiry of Practice

How can we utilize more outdoor learning, utilize the nature trail, the gardens, and perhaps a pollinator path? How can we integrate core subject areas, and STEAM into Place-Based learning? How can we partner with the community to create more authentic and community service opportunities for students? How can we embed literacy opportunities into our place-based learning opportunities with the goal of improving reading performance?

Rationale for Place-Based Learning

Current research promotes placed-based learning and more time in nature for children of all ages. Benefits include the development of confidence, resilience, diligence, responsibility, problem-solving, cooperative learning, physical fitness, and citizenship. The resources we have at our building site afford opportunities for the children to experience nature on a personal level.

Rationale specific to outdoor learning [HERE](#). Rationale for embedding literacy into our Place-Based Learning curriculum: Interdisciplinary curriculum is more authentic to real world learning. Results of the SBAC testing indicate that students continue to need to improve their reading skills.

Grade	% Level 3 or above 2015	% Level 3 or above 2016	% Level 3 or above 2017	% Level 3 or above 2018
3	*	*	*	

4	*	*	*	
	*	*	*	
5	*	*	*	
	*	*	*	
6	*	*	*	
	*	*	*	

**Information redacted due to small size of cohort, but available to SBE upon request.*

Action steps	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Monitoring Checkpoint Dates, Notes and Evidence of Completion
Design, implement, and refine a Place-based education program which includes Farm to School				
Schoolwide: Create learning teams and learning hubs--- multi-age, flexible, assorted groupings based on interests/ needs/expertise. Foster students pursuing their passion (s) . Create a Primary Place-based Learning Hub.	January 2017- June 2019	BA staff Architect or builder, naturalists, farmers, etc.	Build up a network of community resources and adults that would volunteer to share expertise Create flexible indoor and outdoor learning spaces	On-going, Evidences will be documented with project displays, public presentations, photos, videos

Professional Development in Place Based Education	Continuos	Hannah Thein, Principal Staff Primary Teams: AnnB & Paula Ingrid & Jamie	\$ for: Outdoor Learning PLC, 2017-18 (Ingrid Johnson, Hannah Thein, Meg Schindler) Wellborn Conference (November, 2017) (Hannah, Ingrid, Meg) Sites and ideas for sites \$\$ for subs if we go during the day	Certificates of attendance
Action steps	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Monitoring Checkpoint Dates, Notes and Evidence of Completion
Hire and train onsite Place-based/STEAM coordinator	Fall, 2018	Hannah Thein Regi Carr, Administrative Assistant	\$5,000.00	Job description and notes of projects completed
Design and build a “receiving” kitchen in order to provide FTS curriculum to students which includes local foods and introduces students to international cuisine as well.	2018-2020	Hannah Thein PBEE & STEAM Coordinator Carin Park Bryce Sammel Food service employee	Partner SU school or business Construction funds: approx. \$15,000 Equipment Gardens Local (BA) and other food sources	FTS curriculum, instruction, assessment Menus
Develop	SY 2018-	Hannah	Time to plan	Schedule of School labs and field

<p>partnerships with each school in the SU to offer specialized instruction and experiences for students at each site</p> <p>This intersects with the Supervisory Goal of: "The system will promote smooth academic and social transitions as students move among/between grades and schools, Pre K-12."</p>	19	<p>Thein Principals of the Supervisory Union</p> <p>PBEE & STEAM coordinator</p>	<p>sites (e.g. STEAM projects at Silver Lake in Barnard, Observatory projects at The Prosper Valley School)</p>	<p>trips to each school</p> <p>Curriculum Instruction, assessment description</p> <p>Curriculum maps</p> <p>Evidence of citizenship, communication skills</p> <p>Development of independence</p> <p>Increases in self-esteem and conflict resolution skills Improved behavior in class</p> <p>Greater pride and ownership of accomplishments</p>
<p>Increase higher-level thinking skills through the implementation of interdisciplinary curriculum across reading, writing, social studies, STEAM, and socio-emotional skills</p>	SY 2018-19	<p>Hannah Thein</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>WCSU staff</p>	<p>BA PD</p> <p>WCSU PD</p> <p>Model Curriculum</p> <p>Model Sites</p>	<p>Formative and summative evidence of multisensory learning Engineering/building/Modeling (ie, sculptures, buildings, etc.)</p> <p>Creative writing & Poetry</p> <p>Curriculum Maps</p> <p>Student projects and portfolios</p> <p>Data gathered on SEL</p>
<p>Embed literacy opportunities into Place-based learning</p> <p>This intersects with the Supervisory Goal</p>	Continuous	<p>Hannah Thein</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Primary Teams</p>	<p>Curriculum PD Seeds of Science books</p> <p>Relevant leveled reading, nonfiction & fiction</p>	<p>Open-ended and performance assessments</p> <p>Student portfolios</p> <p>This intersects with the SU action plan assessments: Response to literature Journal (ie. science, writing, reading),</p>

<p>of: “Goal 4: Teachers will use assessments tools and strategies that provide for open-ended and performance assessments to monitor reading progress for all students.”</p>				Notebooks (ie. science) Conversation, discussion, public speaking, finding evidence for academic arguments
<p>Improve reading performance in Tier I and II instruction.</p> <p>This intersects with the Supervisory Goal of: “Strategy 1: Utilize ALOFT Literacy Framework (VT Reads), Fountas and Pinnell Framework and Vermont Reads Initiative Middle and High School framework to guide curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development decision-making.”</p>	Continuous	Hannah Thein Teachers Primary Teams	Leveled Literacy Intervention program Foundations program	Higher scores on standardized measures of academic achievement including Fountas & Pinnell, SBAC scores EST notes and data Student portfolios
<p>Expand learning in and outside the school for students by developing reciprocal partnerships with individuals and groups in the wider community.</p> <p>(SU goals: “Principals will maximize school resources by including families and communities as valuable partners in</p>	Continuous	Hannah Thein PBE/STEAM Coordinator Staff Carin Park Chloe Powell Christine Frohloff (WUHS greenhouse)	Local Farms WUHS greenhouse	Establishment of Ottauquechee community partnership and other partnerships FTS lessons by community members Elders and youth reciprocal caring projects

developing literate students.”; Community Engagement and Involvement (ie. volunteers and agents of expertise).		manager)		
Increase, maintain and utilize Gardens, including a winter garden and hydro and aquaponics	Continuo us	Hannah Thein Staff members and community members PBEE & STEAM coordinator	Watering, weeding schedule Gardening materials and supplies STEAM materials	Increased offering of gardens and use of gardens, Student products
Create and utilize a Pollinator Path for student learning and to provide habitat for pollinators	Fall 2018-2020	Hannah Thein Local groups Students Staff Community members	Plants, soil, cultivator, tools for adults and students. Wild For Pollinators resources	Curriculum Utilization of path for student learning Student Projects Student lab notebooks
Expand, Maintain and continually use Nature Trail System-- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make visible & accessible to all students and community 	Continuo us	Hannah Thein Local groups Students Staff Community members	Staff & Community volunteerism and expertise	Trail map Visitor log

Expansion of current and development of new outdoor classroom	Spring, 2018		\$\$ / materials and volunteers to build long-term structure	
Expanded offerings for playground, in the Pre-K outdoor space	Continuous	Hannah Thein Ann B & Paula Local volunteers	Use of natural features on our campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended loose parts for imaginative play, tinkering and construction • mud kitchen • area for gardening • area for small world play • area for large muscle development (climbing, swings, bikes, etc) • sensory play (sandbox and water table) 	Curriculum specifying projects Play-based experiences on PreK playground

			and music wall with recycled materials	
Primary Team will explore the Reggio Emilia approach to inform early childhood Place-based education	2018-2020	Hannah Thein Primary Teams	Partnerships with Reggio Schools PD	Exploration and projects using local and international sites
Create a shed for gardening on or off site (on a local farm).	2018-2019	Hannah Thein Primary Teams	Materials	Use of shed

Resources

[Place-based education evaluation collaborative](#)

Goal Number: #2 STEAM	Statement of Goal: Develop and offer S.T.E.A.M opportunities targeting increased performance in interdisciplinary curriculum areas.
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Inquiry of Practice: What professional work needs to be accomplished to help develop a STEAM program initiative that will improve student’s learning, interest and enjoyment in engineering, science, and math?

Rationale for STEAM:

STEAM was created by the Rhode Island School of Design education. It stands for 'Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics,' and is a method of educational focus on these subjects. Their goal is to foster the “true innovation that comes with combining the mind of a scientist or technologist with that of an artist or designer.” STEAM is an inclusive, engaging learning environment. Instead of teaching subjects in the traditional silos, STEAM brings the disciplines together, leveraging the dynamic synergy between the modeling process and math and science content. Adding the arts to STEM is important because it ensures such practices as modeling, explanations, critique, and evaluation (argumentation), are emphasized in the context of math and science. Infusing the arts also fosters creativity.

In order to prepare students for rapid advances in technology, education must change. Technology and outsourcing is replacing repetitive tasks and changing the job landscape in a myriad of ways: students must be able to solve novel problems. Standardized, rote learning that teaches to a test is ineffective when dealing with a world that has systemic, pervasive and confounding global challenges. Students must solve real world problems in an interdisciplinary and collaborative setting.

Students must be able to fill jobs which do not even exist yet. Students must be able to think like scientists, engineers or designers to meet new challenges and design solutions that were previously thought impossible. According to the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation, "The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that jobs in science, technology, and math will grow 17% by 2018, nearly double the growth of non-STEM fields. By 2018, the U.S. will have more than 1.2 million unfilled STEM jobs."

STEAM can provide a pathway to the 4Cs (collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication) and to the Framework for 21st Century Learning, the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in work, life and citizenship.

As students strengthen their inquiry skills they are strengthening their critical thinking skills. They will also become familiar with inquiry process and developing a testable question, a procedure to provide evidence, and analyze the evidence to answer their inquiry. These are valuable skills throughout society today.

Action steps	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	Monitoring Checkpoint Dates, Notes and Evidence of Completion
Schoolwide: Create learning teams and learning hubs---multi-age, flexible, assorted groupings based on interests/ needs/expertise.	January 2017-June 2019	BA staff Architects or builders Scientists, engineers, mathematicians, artists	Build up a network of community resources and adults that would volunteer to share expertise Create three learning hubs at BA with flexible spaces and flexible furniture	On-going Evidence will be documented with project displays, public presentations, photos, videos
Hire and train onsite Place-based/STEAM	Fall, 2018	Hannah Thein	\$5,000.00	Job description

coordinator		Regi Carr, Administrative Assistant		and Notes of projects completed
Technology teacher and Science teacher will pursue STEAM certification	2018- 2020	Eileen Vaughn Nancy Boymer	PD money	Completed coursework
Collaboratively design and implement new STEAM units and projects, integrating place-based learning as much as possible	January 2016-June 2019	Hannah Thein Staff Intermediate Teams: Meg & Britney Nancy, Eileen, Janet, Sharon	PD Time to collaborate and reflect Literacy and Math coaches STEAM expertise provided by Eileen Vaughn and other experts NGSS standards Core Knowledge curriculum	Strong inquiry-based science units including questioning techniques, problem solving skills, and tasks to answer student questions. SU units (VCAT) used as a springboard Core Knowledge units integrated Performance- based assessments illustrating that students have acquired science concepts at a deep level Formative and summative evidence of

				<p>multisensory learning.</p> <p>Units include design thinking and the inquiry cycle to structure students' learning</p>
<p>Integrate the Arts and Humanities into STEAM projects (e.g. history, ecology, mindfulness and appreciation-social justice, health and wellness)</p>	<p>Continuou s</p>	<p>Hannah Thein</p> <p>Intermediate Teams</p> <p>Jillian Stevens</p> <p>Local partnerships with community and other service organizations such as Valley Quest, (Lauren Griswold) /White River Partnership (Dan Ruddell)</p>	<p>Common planning time</p> <p>PD</p> <p>Forest Fridays</p> <p>Outdoor spaces, tech connection with WUHS & NuVu.</p>	<p>Units</p> <p>Formative and Summative assessment of projects</p> <p>Quests (G3&4)</p>
<p>Align Math and Science curriculum: NGSS aligns with the mathematics CCSS for each grade level</p>	<p>Continuou s</p>	<p>Hannah Thein</p> <p>Intermediate Teams</p>	<p>NGSS PD</p> <p>PD with Math coaches (Kathy Ernst, and Britney Koetsier)</p> <p>Collaborative time</p>	<p>The SU initiative of implementing aligned mathematics curriculum</p>

				and developing uniform mathematics assessment will result in a close alliance with the grade level NGSS units
<p>Increase guided inquiry, and project-based practices in the school</p> <p>After developing a base in content and skills, use the inquiry cycle to develop a measurable system to determine students' understanding of concepts and their ability to complete STEAM projects</p>	2018-2020	<p>BA staff</p> <p>WCSU PD</p> <p>Intermediate Teams</p>	<p>Collaborative Time</p> <p>PD</p>	<p>Performance-based assessments aligned with NGSS and assessed with rubrics aligned with inquiry tasks</p> <p>Standardized scores reflecting inquiry in previous years: <i>NECAP</i> <i>Average scaled score for 2015, 2016, and 2017 is 449</i> <i>9.5% were Below Proficient (notated by a 2)</i> <i>85.7% were Proficient (notated by a 3)</i> <i>4.8% were Proficient with Distinction (notated by a 4)</i></p>
Teachers will partner with the Montshire Museum of Science School	October-June 2019	Hannah Thein	Meeting and in-service time scheduled	As of December, 2017:

<p>Program, as well as other area institutions, to help improve students' inquiry skills through the STEAM approach to teaching</p> <p>Staff will engage in content Specific PD and Inquiry PD</p>		<p>PBEE/STEAM coordinator</p> <p>BA Staff</p> <p>Montshire Staff</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Community</p>	<p>Substitutes for PD at Montshire</p> <p>Release time for unit design and reflection</p> <p>Co- teaching</p> <p>Materials: Partnerships often include materials, individualized content instruction, and mentorship. Experiences at the Montshire enable classes to participate in activities requiring space and materials that are exclusive to the museum environment</p>	<p>Ingrid Johnson- K participated in Engineering project training</p> <p>Jamie Gidney will be going to training for "Light and Sound"</p> <p>Other BA staff will continue to develop curriculum, instruction, and assessments with the support of Montshire staff, including work with Britney Koetsier to integrate math for K-6 units</p> <p>Community Science Celebration with Montshire</p>
<p>Partner with Marsh Billings Rockefeller</p>	<p>September 2017</p>	<p>Nancy Boymer</p>	<p>Planning time with SU 6th grade teachers and</p>	<p>Student artifacts</p>

Partner with National Historical Park and SU	Each Fall	PBEE/STEAM coordinator Staff	MBRNHP personnel	Assessment of projects
Nature's Classroom	Each Spring	Nancy Boymer PBEE/STEAM coordinator Grade 6 students in the SU	Funding	Student products Student acquisition of concepts and skills
Develop STEAM projects at BA for a new STEAM WCSU ES partnering initiative across the SU	January 2017-June 2019	SU administrators Eileen Vaughn PBEE/STEAM coordinator Hannah Thein Britney Koetsier	Open source resources (e.g. betterlessons.com) Time to collaborate Principal and Superintendent support	Student products and experiences Student acquisition of concepts and skills
Pilot new Exploratorium (Maker) Space at BA in current library space, create videos and photographic art	January 2107-June 2019	Eileen Vaughn Hannah Thein PBEE/STEAM coordinator Intermediate Team	Laminated glass, maker materials, shelving	Photos and student projects Exhibit of at least one project per grade Student led projects and experiences
Create display and exhibition spaces increase	January 2018-	BA staff, architect or	Materials	Locations- classrooms,

transparency by making learning visible through transparent walls, gathering places	2020	builder PBEE/STEAM coordinator	Furniture	hallways, outdoors
Infuse technology into STEAM units and through interdisciplinary curriculum	January 2017-2019	Hannah Thein Intermediate Teams SU staff Community Partners	PD, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design thinking. • Computer coding, e.g. Scratch • Coding in the physical world Lego 2.0 robotics • Makey makey (coding, physical & virtual world) 	Student products Student community services Student businesses Project performance assessment
Create Community/school partnerships: project-based, authentic purpose	2018-2020	Hannah Thein PBEE/STEAM coordinator Intermediate Teams SU staff Community Partners	Community connections	Community/B A staff led classes, projects, mentorships, businesses
WCSU ES partnership where each school specializes in providing resources or place based resources to enrich students' experiences: eg STEAM boat building on Silver Lake, Prosper's observatory, Killington's sugar shack, WUHS	2018-2020	Hannah Thein PBEE/STEAM coordinator Intermediate Team	SU connections Time to collaborate	Schedule of events Assessment of projects

greenhouses and Nuvue Lab resources				
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Additional initiatives for 2018-2019

- Responsive Classroom
- Increased Foreign Language
- Improving PreK (Reggio Emilia inspired)

APPENDIX D – Staffing and Staff Support

Overview of Staffing

Barnard Academy has highly-committed, licensed, and qualified staffing; and staff turnover is very low. The school follows State recommendations for 0-20 students per teacher in K-3, and 0-25 students per teacher for 4-6. The staff coordinates curricula within the district and with teachers throughout the supervisory union. The commitment to curricula-sharing and instructional technique has been in place for decades, and includes programs that place elementary and secondary school students together to create connections across the curricula, share resources, and create mentor relations between older and younger students. Support staff members are housed within the supervisory union, so there is no special education director, essential early education director, or Title I coordinator within the school itself. The supervision of administration and teachers within the school and within the SU, as well as mandatory professional development meetings for teachers and administrators are listed below.

i. Ratios

a. AOE Student-Teacher Ratios (*School Reports 2016-17 and 2015-16*)



SU/SD NAME: Windsor Central SU
 SCHOOL NAME: Barnard Central School
 SCHOOL YEAR: 2016-2017

School Report

Barnard Central School		Student Count				
Grade	Enrollment					
Pre-Kindergarten	18					
Kindergarten - Full Time	4					
1st Grade	9					
2nd Grade	11					
3rd Grade	8					
4th Grade	7					
5th Grade	5					
6th Grade	8					
Total Enrollment	70					

Student Type: Student Support Services

Barnard Central School

Windsor Central SU



	School	SU/SD	State
No Support Services	++	++	72 %
Individualized Education Plan	++	++	15 %
Education Support Team	++	++	8 %
504 Plan	++	++	4 %

Staff Information	School	SU/SD	Vermont
Student:Teacher Ratio	12.07	9.48	10.55
Teacher: Administrator Ratio	7.25	8.95	9.52
Student: Administrator Ratio	87.50	84.85	100.41
Average Teacher Salary	\$60,894.83	\$59,744.04	\$59,154.11

For schools operating PreKindergarten programs enrollment for Early Essential Education is reported under the grade level PreKindergarten. Missing data indicates the data were suppressed to protect student privacy or the indicator is not available for the school or at the time of posting the information.

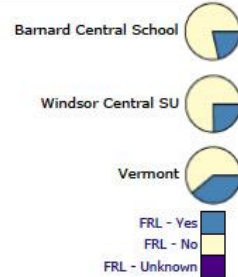


SU/SD NAME: Windsor Central SU
 SCHOOL NAME: Barnard Central School
 SCHOOL YEAR: 2014-2015

School Report

Barnard Central School		Student Count	
Grade	Enrollment		
Pre-Kindergarten	11		
Kindergarten - Full Time	9		
1st Grade	9		
2nd Grade	8		
3rd Grade	3		
4th Grade	10		
5th Grade	9		
6th Grade	11		
Total Enrollment	70		

Student Type: Family Income



School	SU/SD	State
21 %	25 %	39 %
79 %	75 %	61 %

Student Information	School	SU/SD	Vermont
Attendance Rate	94.65 %	95.30 %	94.72 %
Truancy Rate	0.00 %	0.81 %	4.44 %
Promotion Rate	100.00 %	97.00 %	99.00 %
Four-year Cohort Dropout Rate		8.54 %	8.56 %
Five-year Cohort Dropout Rate		3.30 %	8.37 %
Six-year Cohort Dropout Rate		3.33 %	8.95 %
Four-year Cohort Graduation Rate		89.02 %	87.69 %
Five-year Cohort Graduation Rate		95.60 %	90.79 %
Six-year Cohort Graduation Rate		96.67 %	90.67 %

Staff Information	School	SU/SD	Vermont
Student:Teacher Ratio	10.29	9.17	10.55
Teacher: Administrator Ratio	11.33	10.34	9.88
Student: Administrator Ratio	116.67	94.80	104.24
Average Teacher Salary	\$57,470.29	\$58,414.39	\$56,355.04

For schools operating PreKindergarten programs enrollment for Early Essential Education is reported under the grade level PreKindergarten. Missing data indicates the data were suppressed to protect student privacy or the indicator is not available for the school or at the time of posting the information.

<http://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports>

b. AOE Student-Teacher Ratios (Teacher, Staff, Student Ratios, Wednesday, October 4, 2017)

LEA	OrgName	SE/ID	SU	FY2016 K-12 Enroll	FY2017 K-12 Enroll	FY2016 Teacher FTE	FY2017 Teacher FTE	FY2016 Student/teacher	FY2017 Student/teacher	2016 Staff FTE	2017 Staff FTE	FY2016 Student/staff	FY2017 Student/staff
Wilmington	PS283 Twin Valley Elem School	49	Windsor Central SU	183	174	17.60	17.60	10.40	9.89	32.45	35.45	5.84	4.91
Barnard	PS017 Barnard Academy	51	Windsor Central SU	60	62	5.80	4.80	10.35	10.83	11.05	9.20	5.43	5.65
Pomfret	PS409 The Prosper Valley School	51	Windsor Central SU	81	81	8.70	8.75	9.31	9.26	13.50	12.72	6.00	6.37
Reading	PS239 Reading Elementary School	51	Windsor Central SU	41	43	5.50	4.70	7.45	9.15	8.45	9.05	4.85	4.75
Killington	PS257 Killington Elementary School	51	Windsor Central SU	90	81	9.45	8.45	8.52	9.59	16.30	13.88	5.52	5.92
Woodstock	PS355 Woodstock Elementary School	51	Windsor Central SU	168	157	20.00	17.00	8.40	9.24	32.65	33.53	5.15	4.68
Woodstock UHSD	PS356 Woodstock Sr UHS #4	51	Windsor Central SU	341	320	38.50	31.60	8.86	10.13	75.10	61.50	4.54	5.20
Woodstock UHSD	PS358 Woodstock Union Middle School	51	Windsor Central SU	158	178	15.30	13.80	10.33	12.90	22.10	28.60	7.15	6.22

<http://education.vermont.gov/documents/teacher-staff-student-ratios>

c. WSCU Student-Staff Ratios (WCSU Board and WCMUUSD Board Meeting Book, October 17, 2017, page 26)

Windsor Central Student/Staff Data

OrgName	FY2016	FY2017	No preK or CTE school district staff		FY2016	FY2017
	K-12 Enroll	K-12 Enroll	2016	2017	Staff FTE	Staff FTE
Barnard Academy	60	52	11.05	9.20	5.43	5.65
The Prosper Valley School	81	81	13.80	13.08	5.87	6.19
Reading Elementary School	41	43	10.45	11.05	3.92	3.89
Killington Elementary School	90	81	18.46	15.54	4.88	5.21
Woodstock Elementary School	168	157	36.65	37.10	4.58	4.23
Woodstock Sr UHS #4	341	320	87.10	75.50	3.92	4.24
Woodstock Union Middle School	158	178	22.10	28.60	7.15	6.22

d. AOE Student-Staff Ratios (Teacher, Staff, Student Ratios, Wednesday, October 4, 2017)

LEA	ORGID	OrgName	SU (D)	SU	FY2016 K-12 Enroll	FY2017 K-12 Enroll	FY2016 Teacher FTE	FY2017 Teacher FTE	FY2016 Student/Teacher	FY2017 Student/Teacher	Staff FTE 2016	Staff FTE 2017	FY2016 Student/Staff	FY2017 Student/Staff
Wilmington	PS083	Twin Valley Elem School	49	Windham Southwest SU	183	174	17.60	17.60	10.40	9.89	32.45	35.45	5.64	4.91
Barnard	PS017	Barnard Academy	51	Windsor Central SU	60	52	5.80	4.80	10.34	10.83	11.05	9.20	5.43	5.65
Pomfret	PS409	The Prosper Valley School	51	Windsor Central SU	81	81	8.70	8.75	9.31	9.26	13.50	12.72	6.00	6.37
Reading	PS239	Reading Elementary School	51	Windsor Central SU	41	43	5.50	4.70	7.45	9.15	8.45	9.05	4.85	4.75
Killington	PS267	Killington Elementary School	51	Windsor Central SU	90	81	9.45	8.45	9.52	9.59	16.30	13.68	5.52	5.92
Woodstock	PS355	Woodstock Elementary School	51	Windsor Central SU	168	157	20.00	17.00	8.40	9.24	32.65	33.53	5.15	4.68
Woodstock UHSD	PS356	Woodstock Sr UHS #4	51	Windsor Central SU	341	320	38.50	31.60	8.86	10.13	75.10	61.50	4.54	5.20
Woodstock UHSD	PS368	Woodstock Union Middle School	51	Windsor Central SU	158	178	15.30	13.80	10.33	12.90	22.10	28.60	7.15	6.22

<http://education.vermont.gov/documents/teacher-staff-student-ratios>

ii. Current and Historic Data on Teacher Turnover (including the number of new teachers in each school in each year for the most recent 3 years)

Barnard Academy has a high teacher-retention rate.
In the past three years, the following positions have turned over:

FY16: 0

FY17: Art teacher Bess Klassen Landis left / new Art teacher Janet Kathy begins

FY18: 3/4th grade teacher Norine Hopewell retired after 23 years at BA / new 3rd/4th grade teacher Megan Schindler begins; Physical Education teacher Greg La Bella retires after 33 years / new PE teacher Kipp Dixon begins. Necessitated by rising enrollments, new additional PreK teacher Anne Behremovic is hired.

iii. Current and Historic Data on Administrator Turnover (including number of new principals in each school during the most recent 3 years)

a. Number of new principals during the most recent 3 years:

FY18: Barnard Academy's Principal Anne Koop retired in June 2017 after 21 years. July 1, 2017, Principal Hannah Thein began.

FY17: 0

FY16: 0

b. Number of new superintendents during the most recent 3 years:

FY18: 1: WCSU Superintendent Alice Worth retired after a five-year term in June 2017. New Superintendent Mary Beth Banios began July 1, 2017.

FY17: 0

FY16: 0

iv. BA and WCSU Professional Development at Barnard Academy and SU-wide in past three years

- WCSU-coordinated Math and Literacy PD
- The Montshire Museum of Science Program Professional Development: readying teachers to develop and teach science units 1 day prep, 1 day with classes, 1 science night, 5-6 days including collaborative planning. (K-6 last year; this year PreK-6 are doing it)
- Three full rounds of Math-coaching per year for teachers in all grades
- Outdoor Education PLC: 9 dates (including 1 full day) this year
- Participates in WCSU Innovation in Learning Team studying how other schools create top-notch educational opportunities

- Participates in collaborative and site-based professional development for the expansion of research-based reading instruction. SU Literacy coach comes once every other week using Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Program
- Participates in professional development to improve effectiveness in teaching the Investigations 3 Mathematics Programs
- Participates in K – 2 teachers administer a Primary Mathematics Assessment three times a year, and use the results for classroom instructional decision-making. Administrators and teachers use the results to determine interventions needed, as well as curriculum, program and professional development needs. Teachers receive professional development to administer, score and use results of a Primary Mathematics Assessment (developed and piloted at the start of the 2016 school year to replace the PNOA). Scores are entered into VCAT so they are accessible, can be analyzed over time and used for decision making around instruction and intervention. Improved student achievement will result from analysis and adjusted instruction.
- Participates in teachers and administrators ensuring that special needs students are capable independent readers
- Participates in ensuring that academically/intellectually gifted students are challenged, continue to grow and achieve their potential (MTSS for Level 4)
- Participates in SU-wide Investigations “pacing guide” that reflects “Investigations and the Common Core Map.” Teachers get support using Fosnot “replacement units” to strengthen the K-5 program around the CCSS. By using the “pacing guide” teachers are able to teach appropriate/important units well. By using the “replacement units” teachers are assured of CCSS alignment.
- Principals in all SU schools use VCAT to ensure that data is entered, and to identify students or areas of work that need attention. This includes using data for EST purposes and to identify “problems of practice” for Action Planning
- Ensure continuity and cohesiveness of curriculum, assessment, instruction and professional development K-1 through alignment with Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Utilize the ALOFT Literacy Framework (VT Reads), Fountas and Pinnell Framework and Vermont Reads Initiative Middle and High School framework to guide curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development decision-making
- Implement research-based reading curriculum that supports the individual growth of all students including English Language Learners, high achieving students and special needs students

* Note: WCSU Action Plan-recommended PBIS Implementation and Coaching was deemed unnecessary at this time due to small number of behavioral problems. BA uses Responsive Classroom instead because it works well for our students. Meg Schindler is Responsive Classroom-trained and is teaching all other staff.

v. Supervision of Administration and Faculty

Principal Walkthroughs of veteran teachers and formal observations of new teachers, three times per year. Each teacher must complete Walkthrough paperwork on domains of teaching including planning and preparing, learning environment, instruction, behavior, and expected outcomes.

The Principal supervision is aligned with the Vermont Core Teacher and Leader Standards. She is formally evaluated by the Superintendent, in monthly two-hour site visits, as part of the Elementary Principal's group and as part of the Senior Leadership Team. In addition, Principal Thein meets with mentor Shaun Pickett twice a month for minimum two hours.

vi. Leadership

- WCSU is focused on training principals as instructional leaders
- WCSU develops and maintains Action Plans for SU implemented programs, all of which are public and available on SU website

APPENDIX E – Student Results

i. Report Cards

The WCSU Assessment Committee--including Barnard Principal Hannah Thein--is creating a SU-wide assessment calendar which will include common assessments along with standardized assessments, toward the improvement of reporting. These will include both quantitative and qualitative evidence of student learning.

ii. Student SBAC Assessments by grade-level, for all students in the SU*

Percent of students proficient on SBAC ELA from 2015-17

Grade	Barnard Students	All WCSU students
3rd	86%	71%
4th	71%	65%
5th	77%	73%
6th	69%	78%
7th	52% (disaggregated Barnard students)	71%
8th	71% (disaggregated Barnard students)	70%
11th	61% (disaggregated Barnard students)	61%

Percent of students proficient on SBAC Math from 2015-17

Grade	Barnard Students	All WCSU students
3rd	91%	58%
4th	91%	58%
5th	77%	58%
6th	52%	62%

7th	44% (disaggregated Barnard students)	59%
8th	43% (disaggregated Barnard students)	51%
11th	41% (disaggregated Barnard students)	44%

*SBAC data can't be disaggregated by FRL, ELL, Sp Ed, or 504-status across the 3 testing years (2015-17) at this time.

iii. Student NECAP (Science) Assessments - Barnard Academy 4th grade students take the NECAP test* to assess proficiency levels in Science.

Barnard Student Performance on NECAP from 2015-17

Grade	Average Scale Score	Below Proficient	Proficient	Proficient with Distinction
4th	449	9.5%	85.7%	4.8%

* Due to small cohorts (having less than eleven students), following AOE guidelines, WCSU Superintendent Mary Beth Banios determined in July 2017 that three years of data should be averaged together for standardized tests SBAC and NECAP.

APPENDIX F – Financial Information and Projections

i. Equalized Pupils (Source: AOE)

2018: 59.04*
2017: 59.75
2016: 56.19
2015: 56.68
2014: 59.54

* With increase in overall enrollment to 82 actual enrollment in FY18, this AOE figure may be inaccurate (Appendix B.i. *Enrollment, ADM, and Phantom Pupils*).

ii. Total Education Spending per Equalized Pupil, in Relation to SU Schools

2018**

Barnard	K-6 Eq Pupil 59.04*/\$15,564.
Bridgewater	K-6 Eq Pupil 39.31/\$13,811.
Killington	K-6 Eq Pupil 53.53/\$16,970.
Pomfret	K-6 Eq Pupil 49.82/\$14,302.
Reading	K-6 Eq Pupil 46.40/\$17,304.
Woodstock	K-6 Eq Pupil 155.91/\$15,729.

* With increase in overall enrollment to 82 actual enrollment in FY18, this AOE figure may be inaccurate (Appendix B.i. *Enrollment, ADM, and Phantom Pupils*).

**Source: Brad James, AOE, December 19, 2017 (does not include PreK)

2017

Barnard	\$14,986.13 *second lowest in SU
Killington	\$15,577.23
PVS*	\$12,213.55
Reading	\$17,359.43
Woodstock	\$15,239.78

2016

Barnard	\$15,335.02 *second lowest in SU
Killington	\$17,153.03
PVS*	\$10,743.57
Reading	\$17,208.30
Woodstock	\$15,541.48

2015

Barnard	\$14,461.10 *second lowest in SU
---------	----------------------------------

Bridgewater	\$18,308.34
Killington	\$16,241.09
Pomfret	\$18,308.34
Reading	\$17,055.4
Woodstock	\$14,495.83

2014

Barnard	\$13,420.56 *second lowest in SU
Bridgewater	\$15,242.94
Killington	\$13,538.08
Pomfret	\$16,514.55
Reading	\$18,449.85
Woodstock	\$14,018.80

2013

Barnard	\$12,931.58 *second lowest in SU
Bridgewater	\$12,063.54
Killington	\$13,052
Pomfret	\$14,775.16
Reading	\$18,651.44
Woodstock	\$13,176.06

* Bridgewater and Pomfret merged to become The Prosper Valley School (PVS) in 2016.

iii. Equalized Tax Rates in WCSU Towns (Source: WCSU)

2017

Barnard	1.5448 *third lowest in SU
Bridgewater	1.2590
Killington	1.6057
Pomfret	1.2590
Reading	1.7895
Woodstock	1.5710

2016

Barnard	1.6050 *third lowest in SU
Bridgewater	1.1244
Killington	1.8005
Pomfret	1.1244
Reading	1.8011
Woodstock	1.6266

2015

Barnard	1.5263 *lowest in SU
Bridgewater	1.9324
Killington	1.7142
Pomfret	1.9324
Reading	1.8001
Woodstock	1.5300

2014

Barnard	1.3786 *lowest in SU
Bridgewater	1.5658
Killington	1.3906
Pomfret	1.8051
Reading	2.0845
Woodstock	1.4400

2013

Barnard	1.4289 *second lowest in SU
Bridgewater	1.4194
Killington	1.3228
Pomfret	1.5292
Reading	1.78
Woodstock	1.48

iv. Small School Grants Received (Source: WCSU)

2018: \$85,881
2017: \$85,984
2016: \$86,898
2015: \$85,304
2014: \$81,958

v. Education Spending per Equalized Pupils—Excluding Small School Grants received, Currently and Most Recent 3-5 years (Source: WCSU)

2018: \$ Inc. by 1454.62 to 17,018.62
2017: \$ Inc. by 1437.56 to 16,423.69
2016: \$ Inc by 1546.50 to 16,881.52
2015: \$ Inc by 1505.01 to 15,966.11
2014: \$ Inc by 1376.52 to 14,797.08

vi. Percentages of Students utilizing Special Services (Source: Barnard 2017 Town Report)

Barnard:

2018: not available

2017: 7.9

2016: 11.4

2015: 13.2

2014: 11.3

WCSU:

2018: not available

2017:13.6

2016:14.5

2015:14.2

2014:14.9

vii: Trends in Special Services

Over the past decade, Special Education students at Barnard Academy have ranged from a low of 5.3 to a high of 13.2. The average percentage for this period of time is 8.6% (calculated by averaging ten years of data). There is not a clear up or down trend, instead a steady back-and-forth within this range. For the past three years, BA has had the second lowest percentage of Special Education utilization in the district each year.

viii: Equalized Homestead Tax Rate

2018: \$1.5446

2017: \$1.5448

2016: \$1.6050

2015: \$1.5263

2014: \$1.3786

APPENDIX G – Efficiency and Sustainability

i. Shared programmatic and other non-financial resources with other districts in the Region

- Montshire Museum Partnership with The Prosper Valley School
- Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller Place-Based learning with all sixth grades in SU
- Nature’s Classroom, week in Maine for sixth grades with three other schools in SU
- Fort Ticonderoga trip for third and fourth grades with The Prosper Valley School

ii. Flexible management arrangements with other districts in the Region—e.g. shared staffing across schools, shared professional development across schools, etc.

- Technology Integration Specialist
- Special Services: Psychological Testing, Speech Pathology, Physical Therapy, OT Services
- Partial EEE/PreSchool
- ESL: Barnard Principal Thein is teaching SU-wide
- Professional Development: WCSU Instructional Staff Training, Montshire Program and Forest Fridays, Place-Based Learning
- Physical Education and Unified Arts teachers work P/T at different schools in SU

iii. Economies of scale and efficiencies with other districts in the Region—e.g. shared human services, common payroll system, joint contract for custodial services, etc.

- Human Resources
- Payroll
- Special Ed
- Health Insurance
- Bussing
- Telephone Communication
- Purchasing for cleaning supplies
- Data system
- Student Information System (SIS)

APPENDIX H – Statistical Data About the Community

i. U.S. Decennial Census Population Data (from [U.S. Census.gov](http://U.S.Census.gov), retrieved August 23, 2017)

Unlike many Vermont towns that have seen population decreases in recent years, the Town of Barnard is thriving. With a continual influx of new families, we believe the 2020 census will show a population increase.

1960	435	1990	872
1970	569	2000	958
1980	790	2010	947

ii. Housing Data

U.S. Census Bureau Median House Value (from City-Data.com, retrieved November 13, 2017)

- 2000: \$151,200
- 2015 Estimate: \$300,061

2017 Estimate (from VT HomeTown Locator, retrieved November 13, 2017)

- Owner-Occupied Housing Units: 370
- Renter-Occupied Housing Units: 89
- Median Home Value: \$345,600
- Average Home Value: \$435,270

iii. Income Data

U.S. Census Bureau Median Household Income (from City-Data.com, retrieved November 13, 2017)

- 2000: \$45,787
- 2015 Estimate: \$61,562

APPENDIX I: Alternative Governance Structure Action Plan

The Barnard Academy AGS Action Plan supports the WCSU goals to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all students grow academically, socially, and emotionally and are challenged to reach their potential as local and global community members. We follow the established SU-wide goals that guide individual School--wide action plans, administrative team goals, individual professional goals, and teacher professional development plans. We will continue to work to find more efficiencies of scale by partnering with our neighbors in the SU. We support the SU goal of centralizing more services and systems, where there is agreement on mutual benefit.

The Barnard Academy AGS Action Plan has been developed in concert with the Barnard Academy Administration and School Board, and thus, also supports the goals of these bodies. The Action Plan is organized to address the Five Goals of Act 46: quality, equity, operational efficiency, transparency and accountability, and value to taxpayers.

To address *Goal 1: Quality*

Identified Need: Maintain and increase learning opportunities that will increase student proficiencies from 3-year average of 75.27% (Math and ELA).

Goal: Support and align with Barnard Academy's Staff 2018-2020 Continuous Improvement/ Action Plan that names the goals:

- 1) Develop and Implement a Place-Based Education framework using the social, cultural, and natural environment in which our students live as an inquiry-based learning environment to gain knowledge and skills across the curriculum, including reading performance.
- 2) Develop and offer S.T.E.A.M opportunities targeting increased performance in science and math.

Rationale: Under strong leadership and community support, Barnard Academy is implementing Place-Based Education initiatives that will support student success across the curriculum as well as support social-emotional and physical health. STEAM opportunities are integrated into the Outdoor Learning environment in a way that promotes student motivation, access, and understanding. This initiative is a strong foundation for increases in educational quality.

Action Steps: Target assessment to determine level of performance in literacy skills so that instruction can be monitored appropriately.

- Work with MS/HS S.T.E.A.M. working group to align our elementary offerings to their program.
- Maintain and increase strategic integration of community resources such as Dartmouth,

- the Hood Museum, and Montshire Museum into the curriculum
- Implement S.T.E.A.M. programs that focus on inquiry-skill development in Science (Barnard Academy in-progress 2018-20 Continuous Improvement Plan (Appendix C.iii. *Barnard Academy Continuous Improvement Plan 2018-20*)
- Continue development of outdoor gardens, nature trail, and outdoor classroom to be used in Place-Based Learning
- Continue Professional Development through Professional Learning Community.
- Continue Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Review of related service allocation and special education case management

Who Will Be Responsible: Teachers and Principal are responsible for plans to increase science proficiencies and Place-Based Learning. Board of Directors will support the Administration in developing maximum use of staff and facilities to promote excellence, equity and fiscal responsibility. Principal and Board of Directors will organize volunteer groups and strategic outside funding to continue developing outdoor learning space.

To address <i>Goal 2: Equity</i>

Identified Need: Increase access to educational opportunities and support for all students

- Goals:**
- 1) Maintain fully-funded full-day 2-year PreK program (without charging tuition)
 - 2) Expand After School Program financial aid to reach more working families and students-in-need
 - 3) Create breakfast and lunch programs that are especially important to students-at-risk

Rationale: Strong early education has been shown to provide greater skills in literacy/language, math, and readiness for school. It has been shown to decrease the achievement gap and reduces the need for special education and retentions. These interventions grow more costly as students go through the grades. The effects of early education have been seen to reach beyond the elementary years of education in better standardized test scores, completion of high school, college attendance, and improved earning power as adults. Providing the care and learning environment helps young families reduce spending on childcare and helps them integrate into the school community positively. Attending a quality early learning program has been shown to support especially the most vulnerable children in our state.

Our After School Program is open to PreK students, providing opportunities for quality child care and enrichment programs at an early age. To serve our community best it is important that financial need is not a barrier to access for this program.

Finally, students require adequate nutrition to ensure health and educational preparedness.

Action Steps:

- Work with Barnard Academy Funding partners to identify sustainable funding for ASP financial aid
- Pursue Farm-to-School grants to support Child Nutrition
- Identify requirements for receiving kitchen at Barnard Academy and work with SU partners towards shared food preparation resources

Who Will Be Responsible: Barnard Academy administration together with the Barnard School Board and community support, work together to secure sustainable funding streams for these important programs.

To address *Goal 3: Operational Efficiencies*

Identified Need: Investigate and analyze efficiencies gained by centralizing the provision of certain SU functions, such as building maintenance, employee benefits, special education, etc.

Goal: To secure the aspects of Barnard Academy that are critical to the fiscal and academic strength of the school and the well-being of our students, while identifying additional ways to collaborate towards financial efficiency across the SU

Rationale: As a small school, Barnard Academy has always maintained an efficient budget, finding creative solutions for sustainability. We will continue to identify effective strategies for maximizing efficiencies both within our building and across the supervisory union.

Action Steps:

- Continue fully funded full-day PreK program that positively impacts enrollment numbers, educational experience, and need for later interventions
- Cement the cooperation of willing, engaged partners who work towards the efficiencies of scale that are required by law and achievable regardless of merger-status
- Develop strategy for public outreach regarding Barnard Academy’s unique Place-Based Education program, attracting more families to the school
- Annual public review of Board activity and school initiatives

Who Will Be Responsible: Board of Directors of Barnard Academy and of the WSMUUSD, with resources and assistance from WCSU Central Office to develop financial projections and budget analyses.

To address *Goal 4: Transparency and Accountability*

Identified Need: Ensure that voters have access to the budget information needed to ensure

adequate oversight of School Board decisions.

Goal: Increase public awareness and engagement in budget process

Rationale: The current budget process for Barnard Academy offers transparency and accountability to all stakeholders including taxpayers by following Open Meeting Laws, and involving debate and floor vote on school budget. Insofar as we participate in the WCMUUSD we aim to ensure that the same transparency is afforded our taxpayers regarding any unified budget.

Action Steps:

- Apply for AGS to retain individual School Board and budget for Barnard Academy, ensuring Barnard voters have the opportunity to engage real dialogue regarding budget decisions during Town Meeting Day
- Work within WCMUUSD Board for our MS and HS students, to ensure systems of accountability for the unified budget process
- Advocate for fully transparent WCMUUSD budget presentation to communities that details building budgets

Who Will Be Responsible: Barnard School Board and administration, WCMUUSD Board

To address Goal 5: Costs and Value to Taxpayers
--

Identified Need: Maintain quality and equity while keeping costs down.

Goal: Our goal is to retain the budgetary agility needed to continue finding innovative ways to keep costs down, and creating innovative curricula without significant budgetary impact.

Rationale: Our taxpayers have identified their willingness to pay for preK-12 education, including fully-funding a 2-year PreK program at Barnard Academy since 2008. Decisions such as this, as well as combined classrooms, have allowed us to deliver high quality education at a reasonable cost, and investment in our youngest children has positive budgetary impacts in later years (see Section II.B.ii). We aim to secure the ability to continue to make responsible choices for our school and community.

Action Steps

- Apply to the State Board to comply with Act 46 with an AGS that retains our individual School Board that continues to work well with townspeople to keep costs contained while maintaining and improving quality and equity at the school.
- Examine ways to reduce costs by efficiencies of scale in our SU, especially regarding Special Education, and healthcare.

- Continue to identify and obtain grants for curricular and extracurricular programming, such as Farm-to-School funding.

Who Will Be Responsible: All Stakeholders, especially the Barnard Academy Board of Directors, Administration, and Teachers, and the Alternative Structures Committee

**Appendix J – Windsor Central Unified Union School District Act 46 Study Committee –
Final Report January 18, 2017**

**Windsor Central Unified Union School District
Act 46 Study Committee – Final Report
January 18, 2017**

**Windsor Central Unified Union School District
Act 46 Study Committee – Final Report
February 7, 2017**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Windsor Central Act 46 Study Committee Members	Page 3
Executive Summary	Page 4
Lawyers Certification Letter	Page 6
Report – Introduction	Page 9
Part A: Educational Vision For Unification	
• Section 1: Guiding Principles	Page 13
• Sections 2 & 3: Strengthening Student Performance and Programmatic Opportunity	Page 15
○ Strengthening Student Achievement/Performance	Page 15
○ Enhancing Programmatic Opportunity	Page 20
• Section 4: Restructuring Opportunities Due to Unification	Page 22
• Section 5: Promoting Operational Transparency and Accountability	Page 26
• Section 6: Providing a Quality Education at Cost Voters Value	Page 28
Part B: Maximizing Financial and Operational Efficiencies	Page 29
Part C: Financial/Tax Rate Projections	Page 32
Part D: Transition Planning	Page 46
Part E: Articles of Agreement	Page 48
Appendices:	Page 58
• Appendix 1: SBAC Performance Data	Page 58
• Appendix 2: Program Opportunity Analysis	Page 68
• Appendix 3: Restructuring Model 2	Page 71
• Appendix 4: Enrollment and Staffing Patterns	Page 73
• Appendix 5: Statement of Values and Long Term Debt	Page 75
• Appendix 6: Board Representation	Page 76
• Appendix 7: Exploratory Phase Documents	Page 77
• Appendix 8: AOE Integrated Field Review Report	Page 82
• Appendix 9: Committee Meetings and Public Forums	Page 91
• Appendix 10: Sample Warning	Page 92

WINDSOR CENTRAL ACT 46 STUDY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair

Justin Shipman – Bridgewater Board Member

Members

Jennifer Iannantuoni – Killington Board Member

Bob Coates – Pomfret Board Member

Heather Little – Barnard Board Member

Justin Sluka – Reading Board Member

Malena Agin – Woodstock Board Member

Elizabeth Alessi – Woodstock Community Representative

Matt Stover – Woodstock Community Representative

Administrative and Consultant Support

Alice Thomason Worth - Superintendent

Sherry Sousa - Director of Instructional Services

Richard Seaman – Director of Finance and Operations

Peter Clarke - Consultant

Additional Exploratory Phase/706 Members

Chip Davis – Barnard

David Steele - Woodstock

David Green - Barnard

Shiri Macri – Reading Board Member

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Act 46 is a far-reaching law with ambitious objectives to improve student outcomes, create equity in the quality and variety of student opportunity, increase transparency of school operations, and reduce overall education costs. At its heart, the law seeks to address these issues through the lever of simplified and unified governance mechanisms at the district level – in other words, the creation of a single board with a unified budget, accountable for the outcomes of all the students in the district.

As this study committee confronted the questions raised by this law, we spent a lot of time defining our aspirations as a district while also trying to understand how we could best structure ourselves to achieve those aspirations, as well as, the goals of the law. During the course of completing this work, we became very excited by the potential of creating better educational programs for our kids, while at the same time creating a more sustainable operating model for our schools. In that spirit, we believe we have crafted a bold and ambitious plan for a new district.

Simply put, our bold aspiration is to improve the overall performance of our district to rival the best in the state – to make our good schools absolutely great.

Our plan has **four big ideas**:

1. Investment in curriculum: Our schools are at very different points in curriculum and program implementation – everything from instructional approaches to the way we address the social, emotional, and even physical needs of our children - and we face an integration problem once all elementary students come together at the middle school. Furthermore, student performance outcomes vary among our students and between our schools. We believe that we have to invest more in our curriculum and support opportunities across campuses to ensure we are maximizing our student' potential. This will involve both setting an ambitious "minimum standard" of what we expect each student in our district to receive, but also investing behind points of excellence and differentiation at each campus and ensuring accountability for equity of opportunity. Unification DOES NOT mean each campus has to be cookie cutter. We have an opportunity to create a fantastic tapestry of educational opportunities across our campuses if we see them as parts of a whole as opposed to independent parts.

2. Cost efficiencies and sustainable operating models: Recognizing that such investment comes at a cost, we have embedded into the plan an expectation of restructuring our campuses to save costs. The latest version of our plan envisions restructuring the Barnard and Reading campuses to be pre-K-4, and hosting 5th and 6th grades at our larger campuses in Woodstock, Killington, and Prosper Valley. A unified district enables us to better plan, manage costs and drive scale across our entire system. Given this embedded cost efficiency and flexibility, we have the strong belief that we can make the investment cost neutral even before our incentives from the merger.

3. Elementary school choice: Combined with above, we want to enable maximum flexibility for families across our district, as well as innovation on our campuses. Therefore, we have embedded in our plan the development of intra-district elementary school choice. We believe this can be a powerful new feature of our district that will help attract families while keeping our campuses vibrant and unique.

4. Unified board and school/town parent advisory committees: We have developed a proposed 18 person board structure: 6 from Woodstock; 2 each from Reading, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Barnard Killington, and Plymouth. Combined with this board we expect to form new parent advisory committees for each campus/town to ensure we are injecting the spirit and "eyes on the ground" benefits of community engagement for each of our schools. We believe this combination will be nimble enough to create and implement bold plans, while at the same time ensuring we are maintaining local control and reflecting the input of all our communities.

In Summary:

This is a bold plan - very unique. It tackles the ideas of investment, sustainability, and school choice. We believe this approach will absolutely transform education in our district. It will enable us to expand educational opportunities for our children; it will put our schools on a more sustainable footing over the long term; and together, we can chart an innovative path forward for education in Windsor Central. While our communities have good schools now, we want nothing less than excellence. By focusing on investment, sustainability, accountability and school choice along with an underpinning of vastly simplified governance, we believe we will be much better positioned to drive that transformation in the future.

LAWYERS CERTIFICATION LETTER



ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Steven F. Stitzel – sstitzel@firmspf.com – (802)660-2555

January 23, 2017

Stephan Morse, Chairman
VT Board of Education
219 North Main Street, Suite 402
Barre, VT 05641

Rebecca Holcombe, Secretary
VT Agency of Education
219 North Main Street, Suite 402
Barre, VT 05641

Re: *Proposed Windsor Central Supervisory Union Consolidation*

Dear Board Chair Morse and Secretary Holcombe:

This office represents the Windsor Central Supervisory Union (“WCSU”) and its member districts. This letter is written on behalf of the WCSU Act 46 Study Committee which is recommending formation of a unified union district consisting of the member districts of WCSU and the neighboring Plymouth Town School District.

I am writing to address the constitutionality of board member allocation among the seven (7) towns that will be members of the proposed Windsor Central Supervisory Union consolidation. The Articles of Agreement provide for formation of an eighteen (18) member governing board with members having equal (non-weighted) votes. Using the most recent census data board members will be allocated to the seven (7) member towns on the basis of population using the “highest remainder” methodology. This will ensure that each member town will have at least two members on the board and all eighteen (18) seats will be allocated. The initial allocation will be as follows:

Barnard	2
Bridgewater	2
Killington	2
Plymouth	2
Pomfret	2
Reading	2
Woodstock	6

The Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution has been interpreted to require that elected governmental boards be composed of members who, ideally,

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represent similar numbers of constituents (based on population). The degree of “similarity” is measured by calculating deviations from what is “ideal.” For example, a five (5) member board elected to represent five (5) districts, each with a population of one thousand (1,000), would be “ideal.” On the other hand, if the same five (5) member board represented districts with populations of 1,000, 1,000, 1,000, 750 and 1,250, respectively, one district would be 25% below the “ideal” and one would be 25% above. This results in an average population deviation of 10% and a maximum population deviation between two districts of 50%.

The combined population of the seven (7) member towns of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union is 7,931. Ideally, then, each member of the eighteen (18) member board would represent a population of 441. The proposed allocation results in the following deviations:

		Pop. per member	Deviation from 441
Barnard	2	474	7.5%
Bridgewater	2	468	6.2%
Killington	2	406	-8.0%
Plymouth	2	310	-29.8%
Pomfret	2	452	2.6%
Reading	2	333	-24.4
Woodstock	6	508	15.3%

This results in an average population deviation of 13.4% and a maximum deviation of 45.1% (based on Plymouth and Woodstock).

The U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that significant deviations from what is ideal may be permissible where allocations are made to preserve representation along historic political boundaries such as, cities, towns, counties and similar entities. Brown v. Thomson, 462 U.S. 835 (1983) addressed the constitutionality of Wyoming’s legislative reapportionment in 1981. Under the plan, each county was allocated at least one representative. The “ideal” population per representative was 7,337. Niobrara County with a population of only 2,924 was 60% below the ideal population. The average deviation for the reapportionment was 16% with a maximum deviation of 89%. Despite these deviations, the Court found the apportionment constitutional noting “. . . Wyoming’s longstanding and legitimate policy of preserving county boundaries.” Id. at 847.

Board Chair Morse and Secretary Holcombe
January 23, 2017
Page 3

The role of Vermont towns in the organization and governance of public schools finds its roots in Chapter II, Section 68 of the Vermont Constitution which provides that "... a competent number of schools ought to be maintained in each town...." Over the past two centuries and countless statutory changes, public schools have emerged and survived in most towns, forming strong ties with their host communities. The board member allocation proposed in this case preserves Vermont's "longstanding and legitimate policy" of respecting the political boundaries of the towns that have established and long supported their public schools.

That the proposed board member allocation meets the constitutional standards of Brown v. Thomas is obvious. First, the population deviations of 13.4% (average) and 45.1% (maximum) are far smaller than those involved in Brown. Also, the preservation of political boundaries for purposes of representation are no less significant. The only difference is in the number of representatives allocated to the entity with the smallest population; in Brown, Niobrara County was allocated only one representative while Plymouth is allocated two.

To conclude, it is our opinion that the method for allocating the eighteen (18) members of the proposed board satisfies requirements of the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, as such have been articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Sincerely,



Steven F. Stitzel

SFS/gc

cc: Alice Worth, WCSU Superintendent

WCSU17-001 (Act 46 Consolidation) SFS to S. Morse & R. Holcombe 17-01-23 open

**A UNIFIED VISION FOR DELIVERING A QUALITY EDUCATION
TO THE CHILDREN OF WINDSOR CENTRAL**

Introduction:

Process:

Act 46 is a far-reaching piece of legislation designed to encourage the districts that make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union to explore the potential benefits of unifying their existing governance structure into a single, supervisory district with a single school board responsible for serving every student in the communities of Barnard, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Killington, Plymouth, Reading, and Woodstock. It is a bill whose central goal is to improve the educational quality of our schools and to achieve that goal at an affordable and sustainable cost that taxpayers will value.

In the summer of 2015, the school boards of Barnard, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Killington, Reading, and Woodstock voted to form a 706 Study Committee to review and assess current patterns of governance within the Windsor Central Supervisory Union given the new requirements of Act 46. Because these school districts share a union district middle and high school, the committee was also interested in studying the current educational opportunities offered in our schools and to investigate the potential impact of different governance models on student learning. To facilitate the study, the committee secured a consultant, Mr. Peter A. Clarke, from the *Act 46 Project*, a joint initiative of the Vermont School Boards Association, Vermont Superintendents Association, and Vermont School Board's Insurance Trust. At the end of the exploratory phase of the study, the Committee moved ahead with a full 706b merger study to decide whether putting proposed Articles of Agreement for a new unified union district was in the best interest of all of the communities that make up the current supervisory union.

Over the past 16 months, the committee met bi-monthly in open session. The committee has attempted to maintain a transparent record of its work through ongoing postings to the S.U.'s website of its meeting schedule, minutes, working documents, and draft findings. Prior to the completion of this report, the committee held multiple public forums in every community across the current S.U. on a variety of issues related to district unification to elicit comment on its findings and then used that feedback to revise and strengthen its final report and recommendations. Finally, the Committee submitted its final report to each of the school boards in Windsor Central for review and comment. ***(See Appendix 10)***

On January 18, 2017, the Windsor Central Joint 706 Study Committee voted to accept this Report (v.11) and Articles of Agreement. Upon approval by the State Board of Education, the question of whether to form a Unified School District will be presented to voters of Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Pomfret, Reading, Woodstock, and Plymouth at the communities' respective Annual School District Meetings on March 7, 2017.

Focus of Deliberations:

At the heart of the law are five key goals, which the committee saw as essential guides to its work:

- *To provide substantive equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide.*
- *To lead students to achieve or exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards.*
- *To maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with the goal of increasing the district-level ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff*
- *To promote transparency and accountability.*
- *To achieve these goals at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.*

Central to the committee’s deliberations concerning any potential plan to unify the current school districts into a single, unified district governed by a single school board representing the schools and towns that make up the current Windsor Central Supervisory Union was one central overriding question:

How would unification benefit our children? Specifically, how would a new, unified district governance structure provide better, more equitable learning opportunities for our children and better support them to achieve or exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards?

In examining this key question, the committee examined the educational, cultural, financial, and operational opportunities and challenges that would attend any plan for district unification.

Specifically, during the exploratory phase of the Committee’s work it identified and examined:

- The Central Questions Guiding their Study of Unification ***(See Appendix 7)***,
- The guiding principles that would become “Principles of Unification” in planning for the future of the schools ***(See Report)***
- The Opportunities and Challenges of Unification - Educational, Cultural, Financial, and Operational ***(See Appendix 7)***,
- The Current Enrollment and Staffing Patterns of the Schools in Each District (See ***Appendix 4)***
- The programs and resources available to students ***(See Report)***
- Financial and Tax implications of a merger among the districts that make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union, including the impact of potential incentives under the law, and the potential loss of hold harmless funds and small schools grants. ***(See Report)***

Having completed the exploratory stage of its deliberation and shared this work with community members in a number of public forums, the committee’s Final Report seeks to outline:

- A. An Educational Vision for Unification** that would address the specific goals of Act 46. The committee believes that it is not enough to simply point out the potential opportunities that might attend a unification of existing governance structures but to provide voters with concrete examples of how a unified district might in fact operate, and the opportunity to evaluate specific initiatives that would equitably address the educational needs of students throughout the current supervisory union. That vision includes:
- Section 1: A Statement of Guiding Principles for Unification.
 - Section 2: An Analysis of Student Performance/Achievement and Recommendations
 - Section 3: An Analysis of Current Program Equity Across the Supervisory Union
 - Section 4: An Analysis of Restructuring Opportunities designed to Strengthen and Sustain the Delivery of a Quality Education for Every Student at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.
 - Section 5: Recommendations for Promoting Operational Consistency, Transparency, and Accountability.
 - Section 6: Recommendations for Strengthening and Sustaining the Delivery of a Quality Education for Every Student at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value.
- B. A plan for Maximizing Efficiencies** through Financial Accounting, Budgeting, and Administration.
- C. The Projected Impact on Homestead Tax Rates** due to unification.
- D. A Transition Plan** should the voters approve the proposed plan for district unification.
- E. Specific Articles of Agreement** for consideration by the voters of each sending district as required by law.

Final Note: Neighboring Districts:

During its work, the Committee reached out to or entertained conversations with a number of neighboring districts:

1. **Pittsfield:** The Pittsfield School District is a non-operating district that tuitions its students Pk-12. At the request of the State, Pittsfield became a member of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union in 2015. Through its own exploratory study, Pittsfield has determined that it wished to remain a non-operating, tuition district. As such, it cannot join an operating, Pk-12 unified union district.
2. **West Windsor:** The West Windsor School District is a PK-6 tuition district that is currently a member of the Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union. In meetings with representatives of our Committee, West Windsor board members expressed some interest in giving up choice and becoming advisable to the 706 process in Windsor Central. However, West Windsor is currently a full participating member of a study committee in Windsor Southeast. In addition, a preliminary examination of both the financial and geographic realities that would attend a potential merger with Windsor Central indicated that unifying was not practical at this time.
3. **Plymouth:** Throughout the past year and a half, the Plymouth School Board, in conversations with representatives of Windsor Central's joint 706 Committee, has indicated that it might be interested in putting before its community members a proposal to give up choice as a non-operating district and merge as a full member of a new unified union Windsor Central School District, or a Modified Unified Union District (MUUD) should only four of the seven forming districts vote for unification. Currently, over 80% of Plymouth students attend schools (K-12) in Windsor Central. After examining the educational and financial benefits of including Plymouth in its merger proposal, the Committee voted to name the Plymouth School District, currently part of the Two Rivers Supervisory Union, an advisable district to the proposed merger of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union and include them as a forming member district in the Articles of Agreement of the Windsor Central Unified Union School District. An analysis of the financial impact of including Plymouth in the proposed merger is outlined in the report.

PART A: AN EDUCATIONAL VISION FOR UNIFICATION

SECTION 1: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR UNIFICATION

One of the central challenges of unification is recognizing the important relationship that community members have traditionally had with their local schools and the uncertainty that goes with establishing new patterns of governance. In establishing these guiding principles of educational governance, the Committee sought to articulate core principles that would guide the work of a new unified board and foster confidence in each of our school communities concerning the new unified district's educational operations and educational quality.

Note: A fundamental understanding inherent in this report is that any new unified board will seek to implement key provisions of the Committee's findings/vision to insure the realization of these principles and to keep faith with the expressed wishes of voters who voted for unification based on the vision, principles, and recommendations expressed in this report.

Educational:

1. High standards for student achievement will be uniform across the new district and based on multiple assessment strategies. Every student will reach or exceed proficiency in both ELA and Math by 2023 – competitive with the top 5% of schools in Vermont (consistent with a student's individualized learning plan).
2. Decisions on instructional configurations (class size, single vs. multi-age groupings) should be based on sound educational principles, and be practicable and sustainable.
3. By 2021, class sizes (single or multi-age) are at a minimum of 12 with a maximum of 20 for grades k -3, and 25 for grades 4 – 6 (Vermont Model Class Policy AOE) wherever educationally practicable and sustainable.
4. Administrative leadership for each building that will be achieved through a full time Principal wherever educationally practicable and sustainable.
5. No school will reduce services and quality for the purpose of achieving equity.
6. The district will work to equalize opportunities in all elementary schools for:
 - Technology access and programming.
 - Instruction in World Languages, Performing and Visual Arts, Health, Wellness, and Physical Education
7. A new, unified district will explore creative and sustainable campus configurations to achieve higher academic standards and insure a quality educational experience for every student.

Operational:

1. Consolidate the management of operations including building maintenance, custodial, technical, health services and food services in order to allow Principals to focus on the educational needs of their schools.
2. Streamline administrative services to eliminate redundancy in state and federal reports, audits, budget development, and data collection, by centralizing these responsibilities.
3. The sharing and distribution of assets are clearly articulated in the Articles of Agreement.

Governance:

1. The new board will develop a unified educational mission (PK-12).
2. The new board will be representative of each community.
3. The new board will establish agreed upon standards for educational outcomes and Board practices.
4. The new board will develop new strategies for local input (e.g. school/community councils, forums, meetings for the purpose of maintaining local involvement, identity and values).
5. Equitability of opportunities must be achieved without exceeding current resources.

Restructuring Schools and Educational Programs:

1. No school building will be closed, unless the local electorate chooses to do so, within the first four years of unification. **
2. The new district will develop a plan for intra-district school choice (K-6) among the current districts of the WCSU that is educationally sound, practicable, and sustainable.
3. The new unified district will demonstrate its support of early education by trying to maintain, at a minimum, a primary school (PK-2) in every community where there is currently an existing elementary school wherever educationally sound, practicable, and sustainable.

** After four years, an affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Directors shall be required to close a school and a binding referendum to that effect shall be submitted to an annual or special meeting for approval by the voters of the new Unified Union District. **(See Article 13, page 55.)**

SECTIONS 2 AND 3: STRENGTHENING STUDENT PERFORMANCE & PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITY

Introduction:

In approaching the issue of strengthening academic performance and providing substantive equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities for all students, the Committee looked at the goal of achieving educational excellence in two ways:

- a. **Performance** – How students are actually performing academically across the district.
- b. **Programmatic Opportunity** – The equity in quality and variety of program opportunities afforded students across the elementary schools in Windsor Central.

In our investigation, we found significant variations in both performance and programmatic opportunity for our students. We strongly believe that we need to invest to improve both performance and opportunity. The enclosed analyses cover the insights we uncovered on the educational and programmatic gaps in these areas. In our proposed **Articles of Agreement**, we charged the new board with developing a specific plan for investing in student learning, as well as, preserving and improving access to quality programming for all students.

It is important to note that we also believe this investment should be paired with cost savings. In essence the Committee is charging the new board with balancing any investments in curriculum and instruction with cost savings from restructuring the district’s current education delivery models, as described in Section 4 of this report.

A. STRENGTHENING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT/PERFORMANCE:

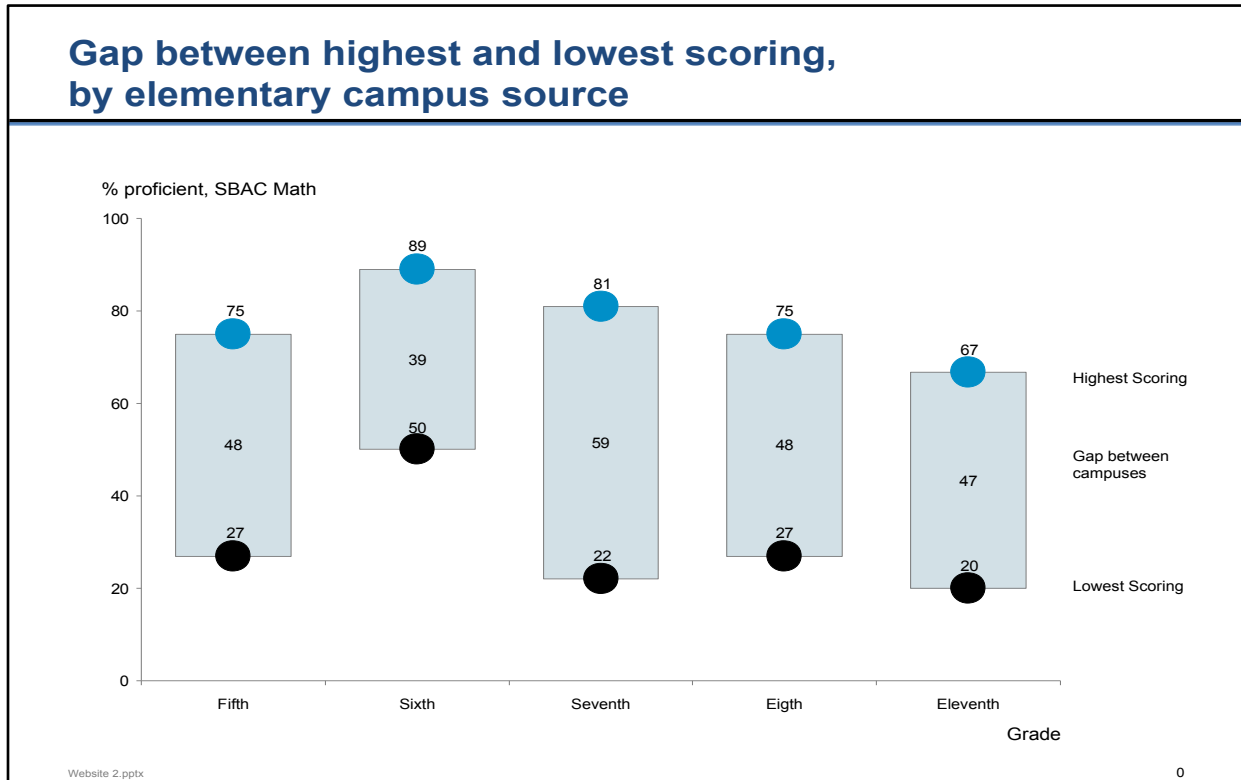
“Leading Students to Achieve or Exceed the State’s Educational Quality Standards” (Act 46 Goal #2)

As the Committee noted in its Core Principles, the goal of unification should be to work to ensure that, “Every student (in the current S.U.) will reach or exceed proficiency in both ELA and Math by 2021 – competitive with the top 5% of schools in Vermont (consistent with a student’s individualized learning plan)”. In the view of the Committee, maximizing student potential must be the central goal of unification in Windsor Central. After examining the most recent **2015 and 2016 Smarter Balanced Testing Data (SBAC)** (*See Appendix 1*), reviewing historic NECAP data and considering the **AOE Integrated Field Review Report based on a review conducted November 8 and 9 2016** (*See Appendix 8*), the Committee found:

- a. Noticeable variability in student performance becomes particularly challenging at the middle school where students from the Windsor Central Schools are integrated. This variability persists through middle school and high school.

- b. Real differences exist in student performance outcomes within and between the schools that make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union, based on an analysis of SBAC Data for 2015-2016 and historic NECAP data

For example, the following chart identifies the variability in Math performance by elementary school from 5th to 11th grades and highlights one aspect of the current instructional challenge facing teachers in our district's Middle and High School educational programs:

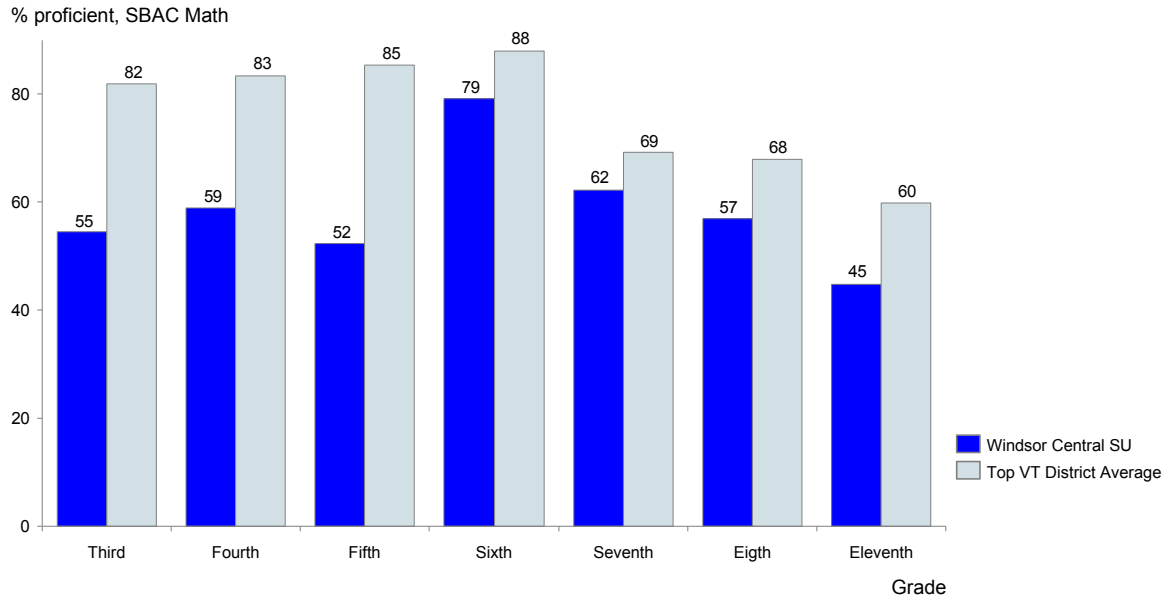


In addition, The Committee examined the **range of proficiencies** in both Reading and Math at every elementary school in the district, as well as, **student progress** from one grade level to the next for the past two years and discovered noticeable fluctuations in the academic progress of Windsor Central students as they make their way through the S.U.'s current educational programs K-12. **(See Appendix1)**

Finally, in comparing our students' academic performance against the best in the state, we also found room for improvement.

Opportunity to make our good schools great

Examples of gap between our district average and best district in VT



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Summary Recommendations – Student Performance:

Clearly each of the schools in Windsor Central has a unique profile of educational strengths and opportunities for students and families. However, each has instructional challenges that require creative, thoughtful, and focused attention/support if our young people are to reach their true potential, and if our schools are to rank with the best in Vermont. Taken together, every recommendation that follows in this report is designed to address issues of instructional cohesiveness, equity and opportunity and therefore enhance the well-being and performance of every young person in our care.

Before moving to the Committee's key recommendations for raising student performance and fully realizing the opportunities that the unification of our current governance structure could bring to Windsor Central, the Committee would like to point out and recognize the progress that has already been taken in recent years to better coordinate and deliver quality instruction to all students.

Examples of this progress include:

- A coordinated PreK-8 standards-based reading and writing curriculum
- A coordinated PreK-8 standards-based mathematics curriculum
- Coordinated and cohesive support to teachers in PreK-12 literacy and mathematics instructional practice provided by coaches.
- Development of standards-based PreK-12 NGSS science curriculum
- The development of a uniform local assessment system
- A system-wide supervision and evaluation system.
- Collaborative opportunities for teachers to work together on curriculum and instructional practice

In addition to these important steps forward, **the Committee believes that the creation of a single unified school board will create new opportunities in strategic governance and accountability PK-12** to address both the existing and emerging needs of students, as well as, the educational goals central to Act 46 by:

- A. Improving opportunities for teacher leadership to support consistency across content areas PreK-12, through:
 - a. Sharing educational resources across buildings.
 - b. Sharing best practice
 - c. Improved technology education and equitable access to technology resources such as laptops, tablets, and interactive boards.
 - d. Providing more tools for managing class size by being able to move staff among buildings as necessary.

- B. Strengthening the instructional practices of the entire system by creating a more extensive, robust, and coordinated program of teacher development that:
 - a. Fosters opportunities to share expertise, best practice, diverse thinking, and new/emerging instructional visions (mentoring, teacher leadership).

 - b. Assists teachers in creating learning environments which:
 - i. Promote and support positive social responsibility through accountability and respect for self, others, and their school;
 - ii. Embed transferable skills into their instruction and to include them in all summative assessments.
 - iii. Implement personalized learning plans as a living document in a Proficiency Based Learning (PBL) system

- iv. Develop real-world projects, instructional challenges and solutions.
- C. Coordinating the delivery of individual school programs to:
 - a. Enhance opportunities for professional collaboration across schools
 - b. Share staff across schools (e.g., world languages, music education, technology education, special education)
 - c. Improve opportunities for talented learners, struggling learners, etc.
 - d. Share specialized resources more easily (e.g., Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, English Language Learning, alternative educational programs, School Resource Officers, Student Assistance Professionals)
- D. Expanding options regarding efforts such as universal Pre-K.
- E. Ensuring common expectations (e.g., academic, behavioral) across all schools.
- F. Developing a common report card to measure and communicate student progress
- G. Strengthening the alignment of special education service delivery models

Summary Conclusion:

In summary, this committee sees tremendous potential for improving learning opportunities and the performance outcomes of our students. There is no reason we should accept vast differences in achievement for students who live within miles of each other. We strongly believe that we should be doing a better job in improving the education of all the children in our district. By thinking of ourselves as parts of a whole vs independent components, we believe that we can better construct a PK-12 system which maximizes the potential of all our students.

B. ENHANCING PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITY:

“Providing Substantive Enhancement in the Quality and Variety of Educational Opportunities” (Act 46, Goal #1)

After analyzing the program offerings in the supervisory unions’ elementary schools, it was discovered that there are very real differences in student access to Art, music, Physical Education, World Languages, Library and Media Sciences. In addition, there are differences in access to nursing services, technology services, and late buses from the Middle School/High School. ***(See Appendix 2)***

This aim of this section of the Report is to fully address this issue:

As a result our analysis and discussions concerning the existing variances in program opportunities across the district (e.g. STEM, nursing, after-school programming, Pre-Kindergarten, school lunch programs, summer programming, late busses), we recognize that Windsor Central has significant differences in programmatic opportunity on each campus. We believe that these differences must be addressed along with the earlier differences in student performance noted in this report as a central part of any plan for unification.

To that end, we believe that it is important to assert that "equity" does not equal "exactly the same." We expect campuses in the new district to innovate, to be different, and to make specific investments which may provide different programmatic offerings. However, we also want to ensure that we are offering our students the best possible match between their interests and abilities in the programs we do offer.

As a result, we have crafted two major recommendations in this plan to address this issue:

- a. A projected **investment** in curriculum in this district (paired with restructuring efficiencies).
- b. Elementary **school choice**, which can allow families to self-select into the elementary school campus which is the best match for their children.

A. Investment

As part of the research of this committee, we undertook to size the gap in services delivered on each campus. As a thought exercise and point of comparison, we sized the gap for each campus to adjust their program offerings to the highest level of instruction on each campus. ***(See Appendix 2)***

We clearly need to invest in our students and programs. At the same time, we believe strongly in "funding the journey" through operational efficiencies in a new unified district. This committee would charge the new board with developing a comprehensive **investment plan** in

curriculum, instruction, programming, student support, and infrastructure to both increase student performance and address the current differences in educational opportunities. This committee believes small differences between campuses are not major issues (and in fact represent great points of uniqueness). However, we also believe over the long term this district will need a unified plan on the expectations of "core" curriculum to be offered at each campus and specific variations which would be encouraged in the spirit of innovation and campus differentiation.

B. Intra-District School Choice

This Committee also believes that our district can achieve much more together than separately. To achieve the goals of maximizing educational opportunities for all students, fostering local innovation, and providing greater access to unique educational programming, this committee recommends that the new Board of School Directors develop policies for offering intra-district choice (along with reasonable access to transportation) to the families/guardians of elementary students within the new unified district. We believe this will allow for continued investments, differentiation, and uniqueness on each elementary campus, while at the same time unlocking a new set of educational opportunities for students and families.

Given operational constraints, choice may be limited only where necessary to the legitimate operational needs of the Unified District and any applicable legal requirements. Policies respecting choice shall also consider issues including, but not limited to, transportation, socio-economic equity, proximity to the selected building, unity of siblings, and the capacities of receiving schools and sending schools.

SECTION 4: RESTRUCTURING OPPORTUNITIES DUE TO UNIFICATION

**“Maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with the goal of increasing the district-level ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff”
(Act 46, Goal #3)**

Introduction:

One of the potential benefits of district unification is the opportunity to evaluate the current instructional delivery models that define our Supervisory Union to more effectively achieve the central goals of Act 46.

In examining the current utilization of teachers throughout the supervisory union vs. student enrollment patterns, it became clear that the student/teacher ratios at many grade levels is low based on the educational principles expressed earlier in this report. *(See Appendix 4)*

In short, many schools in the district have the capacity to serve more students than they currently are serving based on the enrollment patterns in each individual school. This makes achieving a quality education in Windsor Central more costly than it otherwise might be if existing schools were restructured to better serve the needs of students and taxpayers alike.

With these factors in mind, the committee explored three potential models for restructuring the delivery of elementary education in Windsor Central:

- I. Creating PK-5 Elementary Schools/Moving Grade 6 to Woodstock Union Middle School**
- II. Creating two primary schools (PK-2) at Barnard and Reading**
- III. Creating two primary schools (PK-4) at Barnard and Reading**

Each model was evaluated in terms of its capacity to:

- A. Provide sustainable and more affordable educational programs and avoid, potentially, the necessity of facing the difficult prospect of closing any school should enrollments continue to decline or program costs become simply unaffordable in the eyes of taxpayers.
- B. Better utilize existing teachers and resources throughout the district to:
 - i. Strengthen instruction for every student.
 - ii. Enhance program opportunity at a more affordable cost for taxpayers.

I. Restructuring Model 1: Creating PK-5 Elementary Schools/Moving Grade 6 to Woodstock Union Middle School

An exploration of this restructuring model revealed that the Middle School does not have the staffing needed to absorb elementary school students. This means that there is no significant saving in staffing under this model to handle the additional influx of students.

II. Restructuring Model 2: Creating two primary schools (PK-2) at Barnard and Reading

The Committee explored the educational and financial impact of creating primary schools (PK-2) at both Barnard and Reading elementary schools (*See Appendix 3*). In costing this model, Grades 3-6 at Barnard were assumed to attend Prosper Valley elementary school, and Reading grades 3-6, The Woodstock Elementary School. Both schools have the capacity, both in space and staffing, to educate these students without adding additional staff (except at one grade level at Woodstock which would need an addition .75 FTE elementary teacher).

After reviewing the projected savings and the educational/community impacts of implementing this option in both Barnard and Reading, the Committee mirrored the concerns expressed in community forums that:

- Current enrollments and per pupil costs do not warrant recommending such a step at this time.
- Concerns over the educational quality/sustainability of the resulting Pk-2 school in each community were real and should be studied more thoroughly.

III. Restructuring Model 3: Creating two primary schools (PK-4) at Barnard and Reading

This proposal explored the educational and financial impact of creating primary schools (PK-4) at both Barnard and Reading elementary schools. Grades 5/6 at Barnard were assumed to attend Prosper Valley elementary school, and Reading, Woodstock Elementary School. Both schools have the capacity, both in space and staffing, to educate these students without adding additional staff.

The savings in staffing costs at both schools would be redirected to meet the increased cost of strengthening programmatic opportunity for all students in the current supervisory union.

2016/17	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	Art	Music	PE	Language	Library	Consl	Nurse
Barnard	18	4	9	10	8	7	.2	.2	.2	.2	.4	.2	.15
	1 FTE (multi-age) + 1 Para		1 FTE (multi-age)		1 FTE (multi-age)		Keep Current Staffing in specials + increase .8 Teaching Principal to 1 FTE.						
Reading	14	7	8	5	8	7	.2	.2	.2	.1	0	.4	0
	1 FTE (multi-age) + Para		1 FTE (multi-age)		1 FTE (multi-age)		Keep Current Staffing in specials + increase .6 Teaching Principal to 1 FTE.						

Notes:

- Each school assigned one regular education paraprofessional to assist the PreK/Kindergarten multi-age classroom.
- One full time primary school teaching principal assigned to each school.

Projected Class Sizes at TPVS and Woodstock (2016-2017):

	5	6
Prosper Valley	19	23
	1 FTE	1 FTE
Woodstock	24	38
	2 FTE	2 FTE

Note: Enrollments based on actual 2016-2017 class sizes; FTE's based on current staffing.

Model 3 - Cost Projections:

Additional Transportation 5-6 grade: \$50,000

Savings due to Restructuring Elementary Programs \$241,362

Instructional Savings at Barnard Due to Staff Reductions \$167,876
 Instructional Savings at Reading Due to Staff Reductions \$ 73,486

Note: As modeled principals at both schools would remain part-time; this is an important issue that a unified board should explore more deeply.

Net Budget Efficiencies of Model #3 = approximately \$190,000

Summary Conclusions/Recommendations on Restructuring:

Of the three restructuring models explored by the Committee, Model 3 appears the most promising alternative for achieving the goal of increasing educational performance and opportunity for every student in the district while minimizing the financial impact of strengthening the district's educational programs on local taxpayers.

It is worth noting that there may be other restructuring alternatives, beyond the three that the Committee considered, that could and should be explored. To ensure an ongoing dialogue on these issues, the Committee adopted **Article 15 in the proposed Articles of Agreement**.

For the Committee, the key point is that without merging, this or any other future plan for creating greater educational opportunity through a more efficient use of existing resources is not possible.

In addition, a decision not to merge into a single unified union means that individual districts within the current Windsor Central Supervisory Union will have to address the ongoing challenge of maintaining strong educational programs in the face of uncertain enrollments and rising costs, without the resources and/or educational support of neighboring districts.

**SECTION 5: PROMOTING OPERATIONAL TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
(ACT 46, GOAL 4)**

The Committee identified the following recommendations that a unified board should undertake to more effectively promote operational transparency and accountability:

1. Enhance board knowledge of all schools rather than just one. This will afford additional opportunities for PreK-12 strategic thinking and planning including reflection on lessons learned in one school to be applied elsewhere.
2. Work to create a unified set of district-wide educational goals and policies aimed at:
 - a. The effective coordination of initiatives (e.g. targeted and effective school improvement plans).
 - b. The alignment of social-emotional curriculum across the district
 - c. The alignment of student information system usage and data management tools, including training for all principals and teachers to more effectively use individual and aggregate student data to improve instruction.
 - d. A unified program of educator recruitment, induction, and mentoring (including paraprofessionals and substitutes).
 - e. The creation of a unified student handbook reinforcing common standards of behavior and school culture.
 - f. The creation of a unified staff handbook promoting professional standards of conduct and instructional best practice aligned with job descriptions and the standards of the supervision and evaluation system.
3. Develop and foster district-wide planning and accountability systems focused on:
 - a. A sustained emphasis on analyzing common data points across all schools, programs, and students.
 - b. A single, agreed upon set of strategic priorities at the board level, the administrative level, and instructional level.
 - c. The promotion of clear and transparent vertical curriculum alignment.
 - d. The needs of all students
 - e. The communication of a clearer, more focused, more integrated picture of the work of Windsor Central schools, including yearly updates on academic progress formally presented in every community.
 - f. Fostering new avenues for community engagement and input led by Board members.

4. Restructure current leadership patterns and responsibilities to ensure:
 - a. More time for administrators to be instructional leaders by allowing time for administrators to meet with counterparts across and outside the district
 - b. Less time spent preparing for meetings (e.g. improved operational efficiencies would provide more time for central office administrators and building principals to serve in their primary role as instructional leaders)

SECTION 6: PROVIDING A QUALITY EDUCATION AT A COST THAT PARENTS, VOTERS, AND TAXPAYERS VALUE (ACT 46 GOAL 5)

The Committee believes that achieving this goal depends upon creating within the new unified district a real sense of community ownership, identity and culture. To this end, the Committee recommends that the new Board work to:

1. Coordinate school websites to promote a common identity and establish improved patterns of communication and outreach.
2. Coordinate community activities across schools so that certain functions could take place in one school but serve families from all schools. (Examples: District music concerts, district art shows, open houses)
3. Celebrate district-wide examples of educational progress and student achievement.
4. Explore ways to unify or coordinate PTA/parent council activities
5. Foster district-wide opportunities for outreach to community and municipal organizations and leadership groups.
6. Initiate regularly held committee meetings to facilitate community input and monitor the implementation of policy by administration (e.g. school and/or town based councils, community forums, and open houses).
7. Explore creative governance structures that encourage non-voting, community representation and engagement on standing board committees in order to foster greater community input and engagement in the development of board policy.

**PART B: MAXIMIZING FINANCIAL/OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES
ACT 46 GOAL 3**

During its study, the Committee identified the following opportunities for achieving and sustaining financial and operational efficiencies through unification.

- I. State Tax Incentives over 4/5 years; Merger Implementation Grants**
- II. Large Scale Purchasing/Contract Negotiation with Private Vendors**
 - a. Technology
 - b. Books & supplies
 - c. Maintenance needs
- III. Shared Administrative, Staffing, and Service Delivery Models**
 - a. Coordinate teaching/staffing assignments (responding to changing school demographics, program, and building needs)
 - b. Eliminate administrative redundancy
 - c. Streamline existing service models (transportation, maintenance)
 - d. Coordinate financial administration/reduce bureaucracy
 - i. One audit instead of nine.
 - ii. Fewer board stipends
 - iii. Board services/support (stenographer, legal, dues, etc.)
 - iv. Purchasing process
 - e. Increase efficiency in state and federal data collection and reporting
 - f. Coordinate use of facilities
- IV. Further Collaboration of Special Education and Behavioral Management Services**
 - a. Review of out-of-house vs in-house delivery models and opportunities
 - b. Alternative program delivery
- V. Asset Coordination**
 - a. Transportation
 - b. Buildings and grounds
 - c. Deferred maintenance
 - d. Long-term capital planning
 - e. Food-service

An administrative review of these issues revealed that currently:

1. The negotiation of common vendor contracts would be more efficient and cost effective (e.g. food service contracts and copier contracts).
2. Operating at the school level with eight separate budgets does not lend itself easily to cost containment (e.g., requirement for nine audits (seven budgets), separate and smaller contracts for various things).

Board Related Expenses:

An initial audit of current budgets revealed potential annual savings in board related expenditures totaling \$30,000 in year one that would result by unifying the current number of governance structures from nine separate boards to one unified district board. It is important to note that these savings are **ongoing** and in addition to other savings that could be achieved by maximizing the operational efficiency of the new district.

IN FY'17, board related expenses were budgeted at \$160,809.

	Barnard	TPVS	Killington	Reading	WES	WUHS	Sub Total		WCSU	Total
Legal Liability Insurance	2,500	4000	2300	2500	2500	11000	24,800			24,800
Postage	-	300					300			300
Advertising	500	1000	700	500	400	13000	16,100		4000	20,100
Stipends			1800	2500	750		5,050			5,050
Travel				100			100			100
Expenses	200	350	500		150	9250	10,450		1500	11,950
Supplies	200	300		150	250		900			900
Dues and Fees	900	850	850	1000	1550	2000	7,150		500	7,650
Board Clerk		0	300				300		538	838
Treasurer		600	100				3768		2153	6,621
Negotiations Expense	-						-			-
Bank Fees	50						50			50
Legal Services	1,500	750	500	2000	5000	16000	25,750		8000	33,750
HRA Admin Fees	500						500			500
Audit						6200	6,200		42000	48,200
							-			
Total	6,350	8,150	7,050	8,750	10,600	61,218	102,118		58,691	160,809

Additional Savings through Maximizing Efficiencies:

The Committee believes that these initial, identified savings in board support alone represent the “tip of the iceberg” of potential savings that could be achieved through implementing the operational efficiencies described earlier in this section.

The financial model outlined in the next section was used to approximate these savings and to project the impact on future tax rates of realizing a modest reduction in the annual growth of budget and educational spending over the next 6 years of .5% due to maximizing the operational efficiencies outlined in this section of report for a new unified district – **that potential savings was estimated to be \$875,000.**

*Note: Those potential savings are **not** reflected in the current trend lines shown in the financial model used to project the impact of unification on future tax rates. However, it is the assessment of the Committee that these potential savings represent a reasonable financial outcome of unification.*

Merger Financial Incentives

The Committee also considered and estimated the impact the incentives embedded in Act 46 would provide for the district. The law provides for a set of incentives for those districts adopting consolidation. Over a five-year period, the committee found that the incentives from tax incentives, retention of small schools grants, retention of hold harmless, and transition grants would be worth ~\$2.5M.

Cumulative Incentives 2018-2022

Tax Incentives – ~\$1.39M
Small Schools Grants - ~\$0.74M
Retention Hold Harmless - \$0.26M
Transition Grant - \$0.15

Total \$2.53M

The committee believes that incentives could be used to invest in transition, improve school infrastructure, or reduce tax rates at the discretion of the new board. These incentives have been incorporated into the go forward financial model discussed in the next section of this report. The committee also noted that for those districts choosing not to merge, the penalties could likewise be substantial: three districts receive small schools grants, and any loss in those grants would likely be a large strain on their school budgets.

PART C: FINANCIAL/TAX RATE PROJECTIONS:

Introduction:

The Homestead Tax Rate for a given school district (used to calculate local tax rates) is not based on the budgeted spending of an individual school district but on a spending figure identified in annual reports as the “equalized spending per equalized pupil” – this is the amount a district spends to educate a given student equalized across the entire state. While other factors come in to play, particularly the size of the property yield set each year by the State, changes in the rate of equalized spending per equalized student in each district is what drives changes in local tax rates.

Current Spending Data:

1. FY’17 Equalized Spending per Equalized Pupil

District	Budget	Educational Spending	Equalized Pupils	Equalized Spending per Equalized Pupil	Spending as a Percent of a Total District Spending
Barnard	\$1,224,896	\$895,421	59.75	\$14,986	6.52%
Bridgewater	\$692,565	\$516,389	42.28	\$12,214	3.76%
Pomfret	\$848,342	\$632,539	51.79	\$12,214	4.61%
Reading	\$1,059,547	\$820,233	47.25	\$17,359	5.97%
Killington	\$1,682,707	\$855,190	54.90	\$15,577	6.23%
Woodstock	\$3,233,006	\$2,420,412	157.88	\$15,331	17.63%
WUHS	\$11,629,208	\$7,590,258	452.31	\$16,781	55.28%
District Aggregate				\$15,875	

The Committee noted that the biggest “driver” of education spending in a unified merger of all the districts that currently make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union is the cost that districts already share to educate students at Woodstock Union Middle and High School. That ongoing cost represents **55.28%** of current spending in the supervisory union. Put another way, the impact on an overall unified tax rate of the educational spending of one particular elementary district in Windsor Central is comparatively small compared to the ongoing impact of spending at the Union Middle/High School which is not expected to change as a result of unification.

Model Projections:

The financial model utilized in this study is designed to predict trend lines in future homestead tax rates through FY23 for the communities that make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union under two distinct scenarios: (1) as a merged district; or (2) remaining as five separate districts with a Union Middle/High School Board within a supervisory union (the existing governance structures). The model projects:

- I. The trend lines in Educational Spending and Local Tax rates for a merged district beginning in **FY18****** (Merged Scenario), and
- II. The trend lines in Educational Spending and Local Tax rates for these same districts should they remain as they are (No Change Scenario), and,
- III. The differences in tax rates between a Merged Scenario and a No Change Scenario by computing and comparing the total increases/decreases in tax liabilities through FY23.

Important Caveats on Model Use:

- 1. The model was created for purposes of comparative illustrations, and under no circumstances should be relied upon to forecast future actual tax rates resulting, if and when, a merger occurs or does not occur.***
- 2. The model does not account for, nor is it intended to account for policy decisions, management decisions and/or changes in any factor reflected in the model, now or over time.***

Assumptions:

- A. The Model assumes that the new unified district would come into existence in FY18.
- B. The Model uses existing financial data from FY16 and FY17 from each individual district involved in this study for determining the baseline for educational spending, equalized pupils, equalized spending per equalized pupil, etc. for the new merged district.
- C. It considers the previous five-year average for the determining the change rates for education spending and equalized pupils, though individual districts can adjust these rates at their own discretion should they believe past trends to be an inaccurate predictor of future trends.

** The financial model is designed to project trends in educational spending, per pupil costs, and future tax rates and the impact of state incentives based on a merged district becoming operational in FY 18; in reality the actual merger is scheduled to take place, if approved by the voters in FY19 which will have the impact of delaying the impact of incentives by one year.

- D. The Model builds in the tax incentives associated with a Phase II merger over the first four years of the new district's existence. It also takes into account the 5% rate limit on increases or decreases on the homestead property tax rate during that same time frame.
- E. The Merged Model leaves in place the hold-harmless provision on equalized pupil calculations (e.g. equalized pupil counts do not drop more than 3.5% per year) for every eligible district in the new merged district as well as the continuation of small schools grants to eligible districts.
- F. For, the No Change Scenario, hold-harmless and small school grants are phased out in accordance with the terms of Act 46. (Hold-Harmless FY21 and Small Schools Grants FY20)
- G. The Model's default setting projects the taxes on a **\$150,000 house**. That setting can be changed to project the potential tax impact on properties assessed at different values.
- H. The projected results in the current model assumes **no operational savings in year one due to unification** in the first year of operation; In addition, the projected growth in education spending used in the model for the new district is 2% - the same growth rate as that used for projecting the stand alone tax rates. Therefore, the tax savings projected in the model come from the tax incentives over the first four years of the new unified unions existence (8, 6, 4, 2 cents off the homestead tax rate) built into the law.

*Note: The model was also used to project the impact on future tax rates of realizing a modest reduction in the annual growth of budget and educational spending over the next 6 years of .5% due to maximizing the operational efficiencies noted earlier in the report for a new unified district – that potential savings was estimated to be \$875,000. **Those savings are not reflected in the current trend lines shown by the Model in the results section that follows***

- I. The Non-homestead rates (commercial and second-home owners) do not benefit from Act 46 incentives

Rates of Change:

The model allows the user to manipulate the rates of change in:

- a) Educational Spending for each district and the Middle/High School Union budget and for the new district as a whole.
- b) Equalized Pupils for each town and for the new district as a whole.
- c) Educational Grand List for each town. (In the current iteration of this model, the model left the GL unchanged (0%).

To determine a **starting place** for assessing projected rates of change in Educational Spending and Equalized Pupils, this Model **uses the previous five-year average change rate in Educational Spending and Equalized Pupil Counts based on the specific data from FY12 and FY17.**

The rates of change applied to this first run of the model were determined as follows:

	Barnard	Bridgewater	Killington	Pomfret	Reading	WES	WUHS	District
Grand List Growth Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Equalized Pupils - Growth Rate	0.0%	-3.5%	1.0%	0.0%	-2.5%	-1.0%	-2.5%	Aggregate
Budget Growth	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.5
Education Spending Growth	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

Important Final Notes on Tax Rate Projections/Trend Lines: Income Sensitivity Tax Payers

*These financial projections **do not specifically model for individuals who qualify for income sensitivity on their property taxes**, the specific tax savings due to the tax incentives on the homestead tax rate over 4 years (8, 6, 4, 2 cents) granted to communities/districts that elect to merge. However, both Act 153 and Act 46 state that: **“The household income percentage shall be calculated accordingly”** in connection with both the tax rate decreases and the 5% protection available for each type of incentivized merger.*

*In short, those taxpayers whose education taxes are income sensitized **will receive** tax benefits from merger incentives. According to the AOE, homestead income sensitized taxpayers **will see the same proportional reduction in their education taxes that taxpayers, whose tax rates are based on property value, will see as a result of a merger that qualifies for tax incentives.***

Results:

Model 1: Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington Pomfret, Reading, Woodstock

Projected Equalized Tax Rates (Without Plymouth)

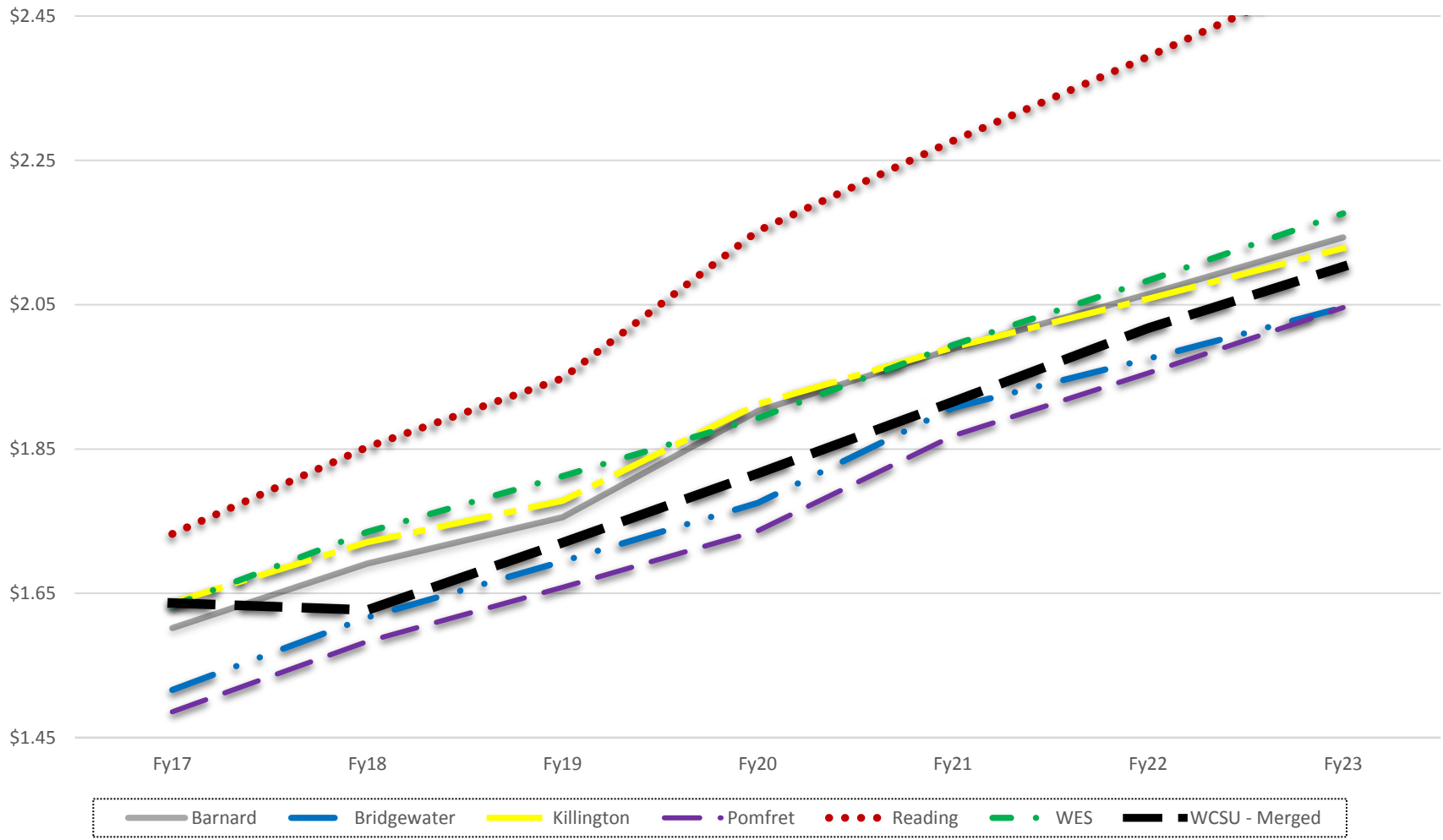
Equalized Homestead Tax Rates - FY23		
	Stand Alone	Merged
Barnard	2.1433	2.1027
Bridgewater	2.0462	2.1027
Killington	2.1283	2.1027
Pomfret	2.0460	2.1027
Reading	2.5164	2.1027
WES	2.1764	2.1027

Equalized Homestead Tax Rates								
	FY16A	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Consolidation - Effective FY18								
Barnard	1.6728	1.6018	1.6269	1.7083	1.7937	1.8834	2.0174	2.1027
Bridgewater	1.5114	1.5161	1.5919	1.6715	1.7551	1.8428	2.0174	2.1027
Killington	1.7707	1.6371	1.6269	1.7083	1.7937	1.8834	2.0174	2.1027
Pomfret	1.4515	1.4858	1.5601	1.6381	1.7200	1.8060	2.0174	2.1027
Reading	1.7771	1.7323	1.6457	1.7202	1.8062	1.8965	2.0174	2.1027
WES	1.6931	1.6330	1.6269	1.7083	1.7937	1.8834	2.0174	2.1027
No Change - Stand Alone								
Barnard	1.6728	1.6018	1.6912	1.7554	1.9027	1.9889	2.0645	2.1433
Bridgewater	1.5114	1.5161	1.6167	1.6943	1.7754	1.9071	1.9751	2.0462
Killington	1.7707	1.6371	1.7208	1.7783	1.9119	1.9908	2.0581	2.1283
Pomfret	1.4515	1.4858	1.5834	1.6584	1.7368	1.8680	1.9551	2.0460
Reading	1.7771	1.7323	1.8529	1.9479	2.1523	2.2769	2.3936	2.5164
WES	1.6931	1.6330	1.7352	1.8123	1.8929	1.9943	2.0833	2.1764

Projected Tax Rates/Savings Due to District-Wide Merger (See Charts on Next 2 Pages)

Pomfret									
Homestead Tax Rate	1.4515	1.4858	1.5601	1.6381	1.7200	1.8060	2.0174	2.1027	
Tax \$ (homestead)	1,426,589	1,460,325	1,533,342	1,610,009	1,690,509	1,775,034	1,982,786	2,066,585	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			22,926	19,963	16,493	60,952	(61,257)	(55,691)	3,386
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,177	2,229	2,340	2,457	2,580	2,709	3,026	3,154	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			35	30	25	93	(93)	(85)	5
Reading									
Homestead Tax Rate	1.7771	1.7323	1.6457	1.7202	1.8062	1.8965	2.0174	2.1027	
Tax \$ (homestead)	1,047,892	1,021,488	970,413	1,014,311	1,065,027	1,118,278	1,189,593	1,239,870	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			122,163	134,294	204,079	224,301	221,836	243,941	1,150,615
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,666	2,598	2,469	2,580	2,709	2,845	3,026	3,154	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			311	342	519	571	564	621	2,927
WES									
Homestead Tax Rate	1.6931	1.6330	1.6269	1.7083	1.7937	1.8834	2.0174	2.1027	
Tax \$ (homestead)	5,036,300	4,857,565	4,839,429	5,081,400	5,335,470	5,602,244	6,000,989	6,254,613	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			322,071	309,355	295,045	329,863	195,999	219,450	1,671,783
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,540	2,450	2,440	2,562	2,691	2,825	3,026	3,154	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			162	156	149	166	99	111	843
TOTALS									
Tax Savings from Unification	-	-	625,948	583,893	740,202	855,624	413,288	436,785	3,655,740

Changes in Homestead Tax Rate - Stand Alone



Summary Operational Saving:

Potential Operational Savings Due to Unification - Projected Over 6 Years

Board Related Expenses (Over Six Years): \$180,000

Operational Efficiencies (.05% Reduction in Ed Spending/year): \$875,000

**Projected Tax Savings due to Incentives by District Due to Unification
Projected Over 6 Years**

Unified District Total: **\$3,655,740**

Barnard:	\$465,629
Bridgewater	\$21,194
Killington:	\$343,134
Pomfret:	\$3,386
Reading:	\$1,150,615
Woodstock:	\$1,671,783

**Projected Savings on a \$150,000 Home Due to Unification – Projected Over 6 Years
Due to Incentives Only**

Barnard:	\$621
Bridgewater	\$50
Killington:	\$684
Pomfret:	\$5
Reading:	\$2,927
Woodstock:	\$843

Summary Financial Observations:

In reviewing the data from the financial model, the Committee noted that:

1. The numbers (equalized pupil counts, educational spending, yield figures, etc.) used in the model are not set in stone and a lot can happen with them. **The model was designed to predict trend lines not future tax rates.**
2. Becoming a unified district would result in tax incentives (8, 6, 4, 2 cents over four years off the homestead tax rate).
3. All education spending and all equalized pupils throughout the Supervisory Union are combined to arrive at a unified homestead tax rate.
4. The difference between the two trend lines (“no change” vs. merger) represent the tax savings in the homestead tax rate due to the incentives.
5. The property yield is the amount a district would be spending per pupil if its homestead tax rate was \$1.00. This year, the yield is \$9,701. The model is not designed to account for future variations in the yield so it is constant at \$9,701 throughout the modeling years. Using a constant value potentially creates a conservative estimate in future tax savings.
6. Local tax rates will be different depending on the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) in each community. The model is set for no change in the CLA over the next six years.
7. The current grand list information was used for each town. If the list changes the numbers will change. The model uses the same grand list totals throughout.
8. The growth in education spending rate used in the model for the new district is 2%. FY2018 is the assumed date that the new district comes into existence. The estimated educational spending per equalized pupil in year one is \$16,485.
9. The law says that the homestead tax rate can only go up or down 5% from the current homestead rate. In the model, Reading does not get the full benefit of the 8 cent drop in the homestead tax rate because the difference in the town’s current tax rate, and the lower unified tax rate in year one is larger than 5%. In the case of Bridgewater and Pomfret, their districts’ current homestead rate is significantly lower than the new unified tax rate. Therefore, their homestead tax rates can only rise by 5% per year.
10. By FY2023, all the incentives are gone, and the homestead tax rate in the new unified district is the same for all communities.
11. The *projected* total tax savings for a unified district, due to the incentives, is approximately \$3,655,740 or 4.7% of the total taxes paid during the life of the model.

Model 2 – Revised Financial/Tax Projections with Plymouth:

The educational and financial impact of Plymouth being named an advisable district and merging with the other school districts that currently make up the Windsor Central Supervisory Union results, in the Committee’s view, in positive outcomes that benefit both students and taxpayer’s alike.

Educationally, 82% of Plymouth students already attend Windsor Central Schools. They create a measure of enrollment stability both now and moving forward that allows Windsor Central to offer quality programming to all students. In merging, that participation will continue to grow as future Plymouth students enter the new unified union district.

Financially, adding Plymouth’s equalized pupil count to the entire district actually lowers the equalized cost per equalized pupil throughout the district as the cost of educating these students is already factored in to the budgets where these students currently go to school.

In addition to all the of Summary Financial Findings noted earlier, lowering the equalized cost per equalized pupil has a positive impact of lowering the trend line in projected tax-rates even further for the new unified union over the next 6 years benefiting every community in the new unified union.

With Plymouth as a member of the new unified union, the previous projected FY’23 tax rate with incentives of 2.1027 drops to 1.9893.

EQUALIZED HOMESTEAD TAX RATES - FY23		
	STAND ALONE	MERGED
BARNARD	2.1119	1.9893
BRIDGEWATER	2.0049	1.9893
KILLINGTON	2.0952	1.9893
POMFRET	2.0092	1.9893
READING	2.4854	1.9893
PLYMOUTH	2.2419	1.9893
WES	2.1392	1.9893

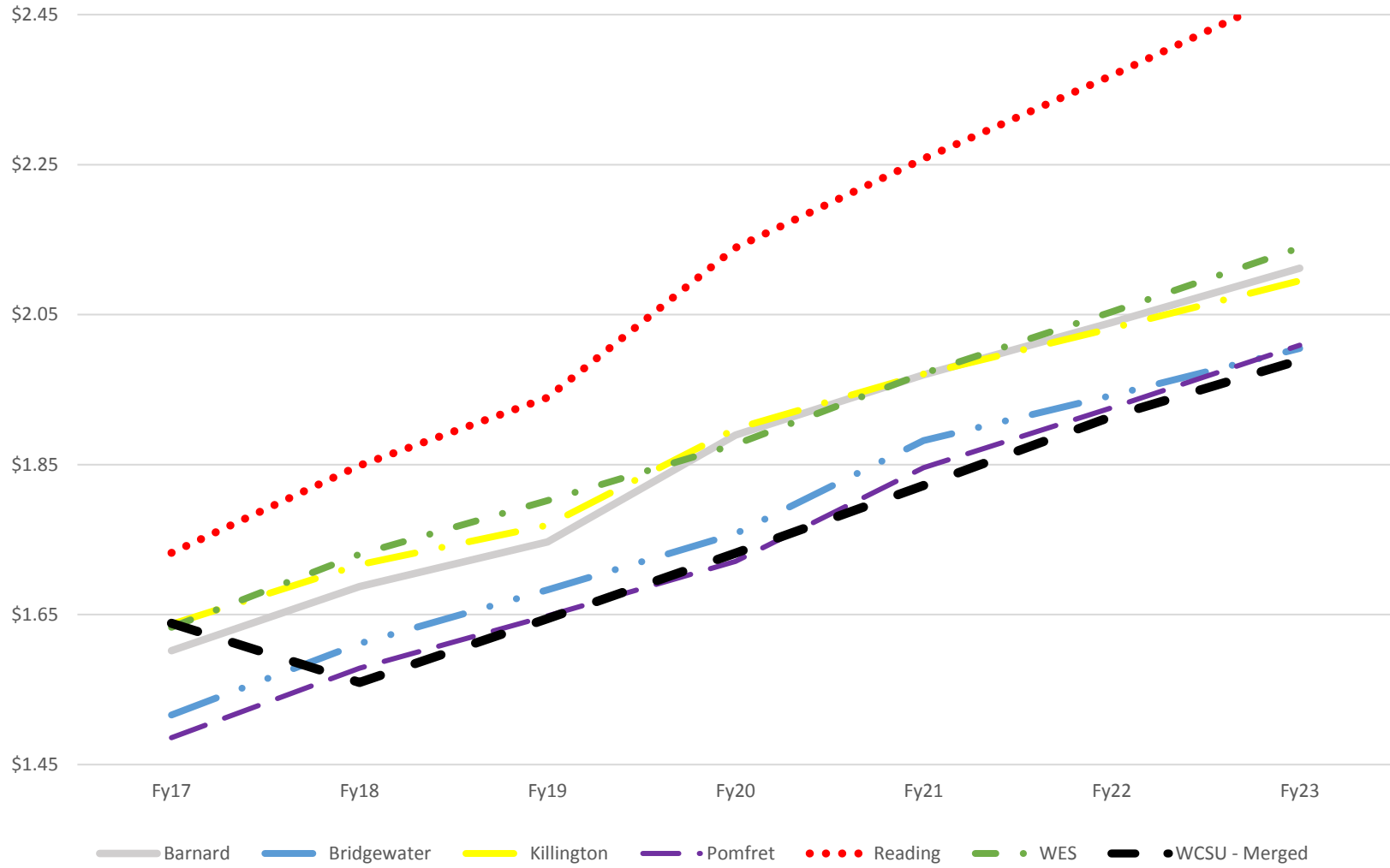
Projected Tax Rates/Savings Due to District-Wide Merger with Plymouth:
(See Charts on Next 2 Pages)

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF UNIFYING WITH PLYMOUTH

Projected Tax Rates and Savings Due to District-Wide Merger Including Plymouth – Incentives Only									
WCUU									
Total Budget		20,781,271	21,196,896	21,620,834	22,053,251	22,494,316	22,944,202	23,403,086	
Total Education Spending		14,600,442	14,363,752	14,684,135	15,011,754	15,346,774	15,689,363	16,039,696	
Total Equalized Pupils		918.64	903.12	887.98	873.23	858.85	844.83	831.17	
Total Cost per Equalized Pupil		15,893.54	15,904.65	16,536.49	17,191.03	17,868.96	18,570.99	19,297.82	
Merged "Unthrottled" Homestead Tax Rate			1.5595	1.6446	1.7321	1.8220	1.9143	1.9893	
	FY16A	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	TOTAL
Barnard	1,125,179								
Homestead Tax Rate	1.6728	1.6018	1.5595	1.6375	1.7193	1.8053	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)	1,882,199	1,802,363	1,754,700	1,842,435	1,934,557	2,031,285	2,153,972	2,238,275	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			143,679	123,157	191,222	185,186	140,864	137,946	922,053
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,509	2,403	2,339	2,456	2,579	2,708	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			192	164	255	247	188	184	1,229
Bridgewater	635,125								
Homestead Tax Rate	1.5114	1.5161	1.5595	1.6375	1.7193	1.8053	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)	959,928	962,907	990,468	1,039,992	1,091,991	1,146,591	1,215,843	1,263,429	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			32,933	28,955	24,421	48,778	17,754	9,943	162,785
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,267	2,274	2,339	2,456	2,579	2,708	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			78	68	58	115	42	23	384
Killington	752,863								
Homestead Tax Rate	1.7707	1.6371	1.5595	1.6375	1.7193	1.8053	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)	1,333,095	1,232,485	1,174,079	1,232,783	1,294,422	1,359,143	1,441,234	1,497,641	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			118,205	99,275	134,322	124,560	88,420	79,751	644,532
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,656	2,456	2,339	2,456	2,579	2,708	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			236	198	268	248	176	159	1,284

Pomfret	982,838								
Homestead Tax Rate	1.4515	1.4858	1.5595	1.6375	1.7193	1.8053	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)	1,426,589	1,460,325	1,532,722	1,609,358	1,689,825	1,774,317	1,881,483	1,955,121	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			18,867	10,799	1,738	39,759	11,323	19,627	102,113
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,177	2,229	2,339	2,456	2,579	2,708	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			29	16	3	61	17	30	156
Reading	589,664								
Homestead Tax Rate	1.7771	1.7323	1.6457	1.6446	1.7268	1.8132	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)	1,047,892	1,021,488	970,413	969,772	1,018,260	1,069,173	1,128,816	1,172,996	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			119,798	173,874	243,043	262,333	268,098	292,547	1,359,694
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,666	2,598	2,469	2,467	2,590	2,720	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			305	442	618	667	682	744	3,459
WES	2,974,603								
Homestead Tax Rate	1.6931	1.6330	1.5595	1.6375	1.7193	1.8053	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)	5,036,300	4,857,565	4,638,850	4,870,793	5,114,332	5,370,049	5,694,393	5,917,262	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			508,324	489,916	468,916	494,980	414,662	446,140	2,822,937
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home	2,540	2,450	2,339	2,456	2,579	2,708	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			256	247	236	250	209	225	1,424
Plymouth	503,088								
Homestead Tax Rate		1.7284	1.6420	1.6446	1.7268	1.8132	1.9143	1.9893	
Tax \$ (homestead)		869,557	826,079	827,387	868,757	912,194	963,080	1,000,773	
Tax savings/(increase) due to unification			86,787	123,258	121,258	127,544	119,815	127,099	705,761
Tax \$ on \$150,000 home		2,593	2,463	2,467	2,590	2,720	2,872	2,984	
Tax savings/(inc) on \$150,000 home			259	368	362	380	357	379	2,104
TOTALS									
Tax \$ Raised in Town	11,686,003	11,337,134	11,061,232	11,565,131	12,143,388	12,750,557	13,515,742	14,044,724	-
Tax Savings from Unification	-	-	941,805	925,975	1,063,662	1,155,597	941,122	985,954	6,014,114

Changes in Homestead Tax Rate - Stand Alone



PART D: TRANSITION PLANNING

Upon an affirmative vote of the electorates of the forming districts and upon compliance with 16 VSA – 706g, the Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall exercise all of the authority which is necessary for it to prepare for full educational operations beginning on July 1, 2018.

The Windsor Central Unified Union School District would, between the date of its first organizational meeting under 16 VSA – 706j and June 30, 2018, undertake all of the planning and related duties necessary to begin operations of the new unified union school district on July 1, 2018, including:

- a. Preparing for and negotiating contractual agreements;
- b. Preparing and presenting a budget to the voters for fiscal year 2019;
- c. Preparing for the Windsor Central Unified Union School District annual meeting, March 6, 2018;
- d. Transacting any other lawful business that comes before the Board.

The authority exercised by the new Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall not limit or alter the ongoing authority and/or responsibilities of the school boards that make up the current Supervisory Union which will remain in existence during the transition period for the purpose of completing any and all business not given under law to the new unified union district board. In essence, each individual district board would maintain its current authority until the new district becomes operational on July 1, 2018. The existing districts and supervisory union will remain in operation after July 1, 2018 only to conclude any business.

In summary, an affirmative vote of the electorate would also result in, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Employees throughout the current Supervisory Union offered continuing employment following the 2017-2018 school year, consistent with all legal requirements, would become employees of the new Windsor Central Unified Union School District.
- b. All assets of the pre-existing districts would be transferred to the new unified union district for the sum of \$1.00 as of July 1, 2018.
- c. Debts and liabilities of the pre-existing districts and supervisory union would be transferred to the new unified union district as of July 1, 2018.

- d. Following the certification of the election results by the Agency of Education to the Secretary of State (30-45 days after the vote), an organizational meeting of the new unified district would be convened by the Secretary of the Agency of Education or designee in accordance with Title 16, 706j.
- e. The newly elected members of the Windsor Central Unified Union School District, consistent with statute, would begin the work of preparing for the district's first day of operations - hiring a superintendent, defining administrative and operational roles and responsibilities, establishing policy, negotiating contracts, developing budgets, providing transportation, and establishing new structures for community engagement.
- f. Through June 30, 2018, the seven pre-existing boards of the supervisory union would continue to govern their respective districts and/or schools. The existing districts and supervisory union will remain in operation after July 1, 2018 only to conclude any business.

**PART E: ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT
WINDSOR CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Windsor Central Supervisory Union Act 46 Study Committee recommends the following Articles of Agreement be adopted by each advisable school district for the creation of a Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 unified union school district, to be named the Windsor Central Unified Union School District.

Article 1. Necessary Advisable School Districts

The Town School Districts of Barnard, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Plymouth, Reading, Killington and Woodstock (hereinafter referred to as the “Town School Districts”) are advisable districts for the establishment of the Windsor Central Unified Union School District (hereinafter referred to as the “New Unified District”).

The Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School shall also be considered advisable for the formation of the New Unified District but its interests are represented by the voters of the Bridgewater and Pomfret Town School Districts.

The Woodstock Union High School District shall also be considered an advisable district for the formation of the New Unified District but its interests are represented by the voters of each of the Town School Districts (except Plymouth).

If the voters of the six (6) Town School Districts that are currently members of the Woodstock Union High School District vote to approve the merger, the New Unified District will be established. If the voters of at least four (4), but not all, of the Town School Districts that are currently members of the Woodstock Union High School District vote to approve the merger, a modified unified union school district will be established to be known as the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District (“Modified Union District”).

If the New Unified District or a Modified Union District is created, then the Town School Districts that voted in favor of merger and the Woodstock Union High School District shall be referred to herein as the “Forming Districts”.

If either of the Town School Districts of Bridgewater or Pomfret vote to approve the merger and either the New Unified District or Modified Union District is established, the vote of either the Bridgewater or Pomfret Town School District shall have the effect of terminating the Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School Agreement in accordance with the dates set forth in Article 11.

If the voters of the Town School Districts vote to approve the merger, and the Vermont State Board of Education designates the merged entities as a supervisory district pursuant to 16 V.S.A. Section 261(c), then the Windsor Central Supervisory Union will transfer its funds, debt, and property to the New Unified District in the same manner as the Forming Districts in Articles 6 and 7, and will cease to exist in accordance with the dates set forth in Article 11.

The Pittsfield Town School District is currently a member of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union. In connection with designation of the merged entities as a supervisory district, the Vermont State Board of Education shall act pursuant to 16 V.S.A. Section 261(a) to determine an appropriate supervisory union assignment for Pittsfield.

The Plymouth School District is not a member of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union. If either the New Unified District or the Modified Union District are established and Plymouth voters approve the merger, the New Unified Union District anticipates that the Vermont State Board of Education will act pursuant to 16 V.S.A. Section 261(a) to adjust the boundaries of the new supervisory union to include the town of Plymouth.

Article 2. Additional Districts

No additional districts are included in the proposed Windsor Central Unified Union School District at this time.

Article 3. Grades to Operate

The Windsor Central Unified Union School District will operate grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12.

Article 4. Proposed New School Construction

No new schools are proposed to be constructed at this time.

Article 5. Plan for First Year of Operation

The Windsor Central Unified Union School District will provide for the transportation of students, assignment of staff, and curriculum in a manner that is consistent with the contracts, collective bargaining agreements, and provisions of law that are in effect during the first year that the New Unified District is providing full educational services and operations

The board will comply with 16 VSA Chapter 53, subchapter 3, regarding recognition of the representatives of employees of the respective forming districts as the representatives of the

employees of the union school district and will commence negotiations pursuant to 16 VSA Chapter 57 for teachers and 21 VSA Chapter 22 for other employees. In the absence of new collective bargaining agreements on the July 1, 2018, the Board will comply with the pre-existing master agreements pursuant to 16 VSA Chapter 53, subchapter 3. The Board shall honor all individual employment contracts that are in place in the Forming Districts on June 30, 2018 until their respective termination dates.

Article 6. Indebtedness of Member Districts

A. Capital Debt

The Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall assume all capital debt as may exist on June 30, 2018, including both principal and interest, of the Forming Districts that joined the new union district.

B. Operating Fund Surpluses, Deficits and Reserve Funds

The Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall assume any and all operating deficits, surpluses, and fund balances of the forming districts that may exist on the close of business on June 30, 2018. In addition, reserve funds identified for specific purposes will be transferred to the Windsor Central Unified Union School District, and will be applied for established purposes unless otherwise determined through appropriate legal procedures.

C. Restricted Funds:

The Forming Districts will transfer to the Windsor Central Unified Union School District any preexisting specific endowments or other restricted accounts, including student activity and related accounts, held by school districts that may exist on June 30, 2018. Scholarship accounts, private donations, or similar restricted funds/accounts, held by individual school districts prior to June 30, 2018, that have specified conditions of use (e.g. in support of a specific program or school) will be used by the new unified union in accordance with their original provisions. This understanding applies, as well, to future gifts by individuals, groups, or foundations who wish to raise or donate funds in support of specific programs or schools in the new unified union.

D. Funds of the Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School

The provisions of Section 6 A-C above notwithstanding, if only the Bridgewater or the Pomfret Town School District (but not both) approve of the merger, all funds of the Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School shall be distributed in accordance with the provisions of their Joint School Agreement in accordance with the dates set forth in Article 11. If the Bridgewater and Pomfret Town School Districts both approve the merger, all funds of the

Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School shall be distributed in accordance with the provisions of these Articles.

E. Transfer of Debt and Funds

The debt and funds specified above, subject to finalization of audits, shall be transferred to the New Unified District in accordance with procedures and timelines established by the New Unified District Board following its organizational meeting, as further discussed in Article 11.

Article 7. Real and Personal Property

A. Transfer of Property to the Unified District:

No later than June 30, 2018, the Forming Districts will convey to the Windsor Central Unified Union School District, for the sum of one dollar, and subject to the encumbrances of record, all of their school-related real and personal property, including all land, buildings, and content.

B. Subsequent Sale of Real Property to Towns:

In the event that, and at such subsequent time as, the Windsor Central Unified Union Board of Directors determines, in its discretion, that continued possession of the real property, including land and buildings, conveyed to it by one or more of the town elementary Forming Districts will not be used in direct delivery of student educational programs, the Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall offer for sale such real property to the town in which such real property is located, for the sum of one dollar, subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or payment of all outstanding bonds and notes, and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants required by Vermont law, in addition to costs of capital improvements subsequent to July 1, 2018.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the town owning and using the real property for community and public purposes for a minimum of five years. In the event the town elects to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the town shall compensate the Unified District for all capital improvements and renovations completed after the formation of the Unified District prior to the sale to the town. In the event a town elects not to acquire ownership of such real property, the Unified District shall, pursuant to Vermont statutes, sell the property upon such terms and conditions as established by the Windsor Central Unified Union School District Board of School Directors.

C. Property of the Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School

The provisions of Section 7 A&B above notwithstanding, if only the Bridgewater or the Pomfret Town School District (but not both) approve of the merger, all property of the Bridgewater and

Pomfret Joint School shall be distributed in accordance with the provisions of their Joint School Agreement in accordance with the dates set forth in Article 11. If the Bridgewater and Pomfret Town School Districts both approve the merger, all property of the Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School shall be distributed in accordance with the provisions of these Articles.

Article 8. Board of School Directors Representation

The Unified District Board of Directors shall be composed of eighteen (18) individuals elected by Australian ballot by the voters of the municipalities in which they reside. Each municipality within the Unified District shall be guaranteed at least two resident representatives.

Based on the 2010 census, the new unified union board will consist of two (2) representatives residing in and representing Barnard; two (2) residing in and representing Bridgewater; two (2) residing in and representing Killington; two (2) residing in and representing Pomfret; two (2) residing in and representing Plymouth; two (2) residing in and representing Reading; six (6) residing in and representing Woodstock.

The Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Pomfret, Plymouth, Reading, and Woodstock specific numbers of directors are consistent with current census figures. Each time there is a new decennial census, the proportionality of representation reflected in the specific numbers of directors allocated to each municipality shall be aligned to the new counts if necessary.

Article 9: Initial Directors Terms of Office

School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot for three year terms, except for those initially elected at the time of the formation of the new Unified District (Windsor Central Unified Union District). In the initial election of School Directors, the terms of office will be as follows:

Town	Term ending March 2019	Term ending March 2020	Term ending March 2021
Barnard	1	0	1
Bridgewater	1	0	1
Killington	0	1	1
Pomfret	0	1	1
Plymouth	1	1	0
Reading	1	1	0
Woodstock	2	2	2

The terms of the initial school directors indicated above will include the months in between the organizational meeting and the first annual meeting in 2018.

Nominations for the office of Windsor Central Union School Director representing a specific town shall be made by filing, with the clerk of that district/town proposed as a member of the Unified District, a statement of nomination signed by at least 30 voters in that district/town or one percent of the legal voters in the district/town, whichever is less, and accepted in writing by the nominee. A statement shall be filed not fewer than 30, nor more than 40 days prior to the date of the vote.

Pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. – 706j (b), directors initially elected to the new district shall be sworn in and assume the duties of their office.

Thereafter, members of the Board of School Directors will be elected by Australian ballot at the New Unified District’s Annual Meeting. Terms of office shall begin and expire on the date of the district’s annual meeting. In the event the New Unified District’s annual meeting precedes Town Meeting Day, the Director’s terms shall expire on Town Meeting Day.

Article 10. Submission to Voters

The proposal forming the Windsor Central Unified Union School District will be duly warned and presented to the voters of each town school district on March 7, 2017. The vote shall take place in each of the school districts by Australian ballot. The warning for each district’s vote will be substantially in the form attached hereto as **(Appendix 10)**.

Article 11. Commencement of Operations

Upon an affirmative vote of the electorates of the Forming Districts and upon compliance with 16 VSA – 706g, the Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall have and exercise all of the authority which is necessary in order for it to prepare for full educational operations beginning on July 1, 2018. The Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall, between the date of its organizational meeting under 16 VSA § 706j and June 30, 2018, undertake planning and related duties necessary to begin operations of the new unified union school district on July 1, 2018, including preparing for and negotiating contractual agreements, preparing and presenting the budget for fiscal year 2019, preparing for the Windsor Central Unified Union School District annual meeting, and transacting any other lawful business that comes before the Board, provided however, that the exercise of such authority by the Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall not be construed to limit or alter the authority and/or responsibilities of the school districts that will form the new unified union school district and that will remain in existence during the transition period for the purpose of completing any business not given to the Windsor Central Unified Union School District.

On July 1, 2018, when the Unified District becomes fully operational and begins to provide educational services to students, the Forming Districts shall cease all educational operations and shall remain in existence for the sole purpose of completing any outstanding business not

given to the Unified District under these articles and state law. Such business shall be completed as soon as practicable, but in no event any later than December 31, 2018. Upon the completion of outstanding business or December 31, 2018, whichever date is earlier, the forming school districts shall cease to exist pursuant to 16 VSA §722. The Windsor Central Supervisory Union shall cease all operations within a reasonable timeframe of the completion of all outstanding business of its member school districts, but in no event any later than January 31, 2019.

Article 12. Australian Ballot Voting

The Windsor Central Unified Union School District shall vote the annual school district budget and all public questions by Australian ballot.

Article 13. Provisions for Closure of a School

The New Unified Union District Board shall not close any school conveyed to the New Unified Union District by a Forming Elementary District within the first four (4) years of operation of the New Unified Union District unless approved by the voters in the town where the school is located.

Thereafter, an affirmative vote by a majority of the Board of Directors shall be required to close a school. Prior to holding a vote on whether to close a school, the Board shall hold at least three public hearings regarding the proposed school closure. At least one of the public hearings shall be held in the community in which the school is located. If after conducting public hearings, the Board of Directors intends to vote on whether to close a school, it shall give public notice of its intent to hold a vote on whether to close a school, stating the reason for the closure, at least ten days prior to the vote.

If the Board votes close a school, a binding referendum to that effect shall be submitted to an annual or special meeting for approval by the voters of the Unified Union District. The closing shall become effective only if approved by a majority of the electorate voting at that meeting. The votes shall be counted and reported by towns, but shall be commingled and approval of the referendum shall require a majority of all those voting.

Article 14. Intra-district School Choice

By July 1, 2018, the Board of School Directors shall develop policy and programs for offering intra-district choice to the families or guardians of elementary students within the new unified union district. This policy will, without limitation, address the rights of elementary students who are residents of the Town of Bridgewater if the Bridgewater School district votes to join the New Unified District and the Pomfret School District does not vote to join. In accordance

with 16 V.S.A. Section 821, all resident students will be assured enrollment at an elementary school operated by the New Unified District. Choice may be limited only where necessary to the legitimate operational needs of the Unified District and any applicable legal requirements. Policies respecting choice shall consider issues including, but not limited to, transportation, socio-economic equity, proximity to the selected building, unity of siblings, and the capacities of receiving schools and sending schools.

Article 15. Restructuring of Elementary School Configurations

In order to achieve maximum operational efficiency, the restructuring of current elementary school configurations will be required to fund curriculum investments, drive scale, and reduce overall costs. To that end, the Board of Directors will develop a plan for sustainable campus and classroom configurations starting in July 1, 2018. The Study Committee recommends, as a starting place for these deliberations, the restructuring of the Barnard and Reading schools into PK-4 primary schools with the Prosper Valley, Killington, and Woodstock schools maintaining their current PK-6 instructional configurations.

Article 16. Investment Plan

Given the existing variability in student achievement, program and instructional opportunity across the current supervisory union, the Board of Directors will develop an investment plan by July 1, 2018 to strengthen curriculum, instruction, programming, student support, and infrastructure.

Article 17. Community Engagement and Input

For each operating school within the Unified District, the Unified District Board shall provide opportunity for local input. Structures to support, encourage, and recognize the local participation of advisory groups created by and located within the forming communities shall be established by the Unified District Board of School Directors on or before July 1, 2018. Local input will be advisory. The Board may create strategies for local participation at each school and may develop procedures to receive input from each school and/or town.

Article 18. Subsequent Admission after a No Vote

In the event that a Forming District(s) that is a member of the Woodstock Union High School or the Plymouth School District votes not to join the new Unified Union School District as minimally formed by at least four of the Woodstock Union High School member districts, each will independently have until October 1, 2017 to vote again whether to join the New Unified District or Modified Union District with admission granted in advance by the New Unified District or Modified Union District. For the purpose of compliance with 16 VSA §721, the New

Unified District or Modified Union District consents to admission by any of the original forming districts that voted no. Thereafter, admission will be determined by Vermont statutes requiring favorable votes both by those districts seeking admission and also by the voters of the New Unified District.

Article 19. Modified Unified Union School District – Non Member Elementary District(s)

If a Modified Unified Union School District is established, any Forming Districts that are members of the Woodstock Union High School that vote NO will be referred to as Non-Member Elementary Districts (NMED). Board representation in the Modified Union District will be proportional as represented in the chart under Article 8, including full proportional representation from each NMED. Board members from each NMED will have voting powers for all general Modified Union District actions, but will recuse themselves from consideration and voting upon programmatic, budgetary, personnel, or building matters of the Modified Union which correlate to grades operated by the NMED. The board is authorized to recalculate the quorum requirements relative to preK-12 issues to reflect the recusal provisions of this article regarding NMED board members.

Article 20. Non Member Elementary District(s) Relation to Supervisory Union

If a Modified Unified Union School District is established in accordance with Article 1, the WCSU shall perform the functions of a supervisory union for both the Modified Unified Union School District and any NMEDs. These Articles of Agreement shall constitute an application by the WCSU Board for a waiver of the governance provisions applicable to the WCSU Board pursuant to 16 V.S.A. Section 261(d) to provide the following:

- A. Board Composition: All members of the Modified Unified Union School District Board shall be members of the WCSU Board. In addition, each NMED board, except the Woodstock School District if it is a NMED, shall appoint one of its members to serve on the WCSU Board.
- B. Weighted Voting: All members of the Modified Unified Union School District Board, except those elected or appointed to represent NMEDs, shall have one vote. All members of the WCSU Board elected or appointed to represent NMEDs, except those elected by the Woodstock School District if it is a NMED, shall have a weighted vote of two thirds (2/3). This weighted voting for NMED representatives is necessary so that their combined weighted vote (the vote of 3 representatives will be 2) will equal the number of representatives from the communities that have two representatives on the Modified Unified Union School District Board. In this manner, voting on the WCSU Board will have the same proportional representation as reflected in the composition of Modified Unified Union School District Board.

- C. The Modified Unified Union School District and WCSU shall conduct joint meetings with a single agenda, providing that representatives appointed by the NMEDs may not vote on Modified Unified Union School District matters.

When charging or assessing an NMED for services provided by the Modified Union District or WCSU, the charge or assessment may be made on the basis of the actual cost incurred by the Modified Union District or WCSU for providing the service to the NMED. The calculation of the actual cost or charges or assessments to an entity that is not a member may be based on any relevant factors including, but not limited to:

- (1) The cost associated with collecting the underlying data and preparing the separate calculation and assessment for a NMED, which cost would not be needed in the absence of the provision of services to non-members,
- (2) A reasonable charge for the embedded cost associated with the standby capacity to provide services to a NMED.
- (3) The incremental costs of providing services to a NMED.

Charges or assessments may be made on the basis of a reasonable allocation proxy. Charges or assessments to a NMED may be made on a different basis from the costs allocated to the Modified Unified Union District. Charges or assessments may be made on the basis of a reasonable estimate, subject to adjustment when the actual costs are known.

The Modified Unified Union District Board and WCSU shall determine the standards determining charges or assessments. Expectations are that the Modified Unified Union District will not subsidize a NMED and that charges will reflect fairness to WCSU, the Modified Unified Union District and any NMED. Charges or assessments will comply with state law and applicable accounting standards.

Article 21. Tuition Rights of Plymouth Students

In accordance with Act 153, any resident student of the Plymouth Town School District enrolled during the 2017-2018 school year in any school operated by a district that is not a member of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union or is enrolled during the 2017-2018 school year in an independent school, shall be entitled to continue enrollment at public expense in such school until completion of the highest grade offered by such school. The New Unified District shall be obligated to pay tuition for such students in accordance with 16 V.S.A. Section 823 and 824.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SBAC PERFORMANCE DATA

2015 and 2016 7th, 8th, and 11th Grade SBAC Scores - Disaggregated by WCSU K-6 Member Districts

		7th grade SBAC ELA				7th grade SBAC Math	
	Number of students	Mean SBAC Scale Score	Percent Proficient		Number of students	Mean SBAC Scale Score	Percent Proficient
Pomfret	21	2616.38	90.5%	Pomfret	21	2614.86	81.0%
Killington	21	2593.67	81.0%	Woodstock	50	2584.84	70.0%
Woodstock	50	2612.18	76.0%	Killington	21	2573.05	61.9%
Reading	12	2625.83	75.0%	Reading	12	2571.33	58.3%
Barnard	15	2569.33	60.0%	Barnard	15	2571.67	53.3%
Bridgewater	9	2521.22	33.3%	Bridgewater	9	2516.11	22.2%
		8th grade SBAC ELA				8th grade SBAC Math	
	Number of students	Mean SBAC Scale Score	Percent Proficient		Number of students	Mean SBAC Scale Score	Percent Proficient
Reading* (only 1 class of students)	4	2676.5	100.0%	Reading* (only 1 class of students)	4	2665	75.0%
Barnard	9	2601.78	88.9%	Woodstock	49	2599.4	64.6%
Killington	22	2615.95	77.3%	Pomfret	18	2579.94	55.6%
Woodstock	49	2621.39	77.1%	Killington	22	2585.55	54.5%
Pomfret	18	2626.17	72.2%	Barnard	9	2538.11	33.3%
Bridgewater	11	2532.55	36.4%	Bridgewater	11	2500	27.3%
		11th grade SBAC ELA				11th grade SBAC Math	
	Number of students	Mean SBAC Scale Score	Percent Proficient		Number of students	Mean SBAC Scale Score	Percent Proficient
Pomfret	24	2640.42	79.2%	Pomfret	24	2666.21	66.7%
Killington	13	2615.77	76.9%	Killington	15	2635.6	60.0%
Woodstock	40	2622.87	65.0%	Woodstock	41	2591.39	43.9%
Barnard	13	2611.38	61.5%	Barnard	13	2619.67	41.7%
Reading	11	2580.55	54.5%	Reading	11	2574.27	36.4%
Bridgewater	16	2561.62	43.7%	Bridgewater	15	2597.13	20.0%

(Figure 1)

Note: Data consists of an aggregate of 2015 and 2016 results in order to form a larger cohort for analysis)

Elementary SBAC Data – Highest and Lowest:

Mathematics:

School	Highest Percent Proficient Score within the 3-11 testing cohorts and Grades	Lowest Percent Proficient Score within the 3-11 testing cohorts and Grades	Percent Proficient 5 th Grade	Percent Proficient 6 th Grade
BARNARD	100% Grade 4	50% Grade 6	75%	50%
KILLINGTON	89% Grade 3	27% Grade 5	27%	89%
PROSPER VALLEY	73% Grade 6	38% Grade 4	67%	73%
READING	86% Grade 3	33% Grade 4	50%	50%
WOODSTOCK ELEMENTARY	76% Grade 6	55% Grade 3	57%	76%
WOODSTOCK MIDDLE (7 + 8)	62% Grade 7	57% Grade 8		
WOODSTOCK HS (11)	45% Grade 11	45% Grade 11		

(Figure 2)









Reading:

School	Highest Percent Proficient Score within the 3-11 testing cohorts and Grade	Lowest Percent Proficient Score within the 3-11 testing cohorts and Grade	Percent Proficient 5 th Grade	Percent Proficient 6 th Grade
BARNARD	100% Grade 4	63% Grade 5	63%	88%
KILLINGTON	100% Grade 3	64% Grade 5	64%	94%
PROSPER VALLEY	80% Grade 6	38% Grade 4	50%	80%
READING	100% Grade 5	33% Grade 4	100%	75%
WOODSTOCK ELEMENTARY	86% Grade 5	63% Grade 4	86%	79%
WOODSTOCK MIDDLE (7+8)	79% Grade 8	75% Grade 7		
WOODSTOCK HS (11)	68% Grade 11	68% Grade 11		









(Figure 3)

Range of Proficiency and Two Year Trends per Grade Level – SBAC Data 2015-2016




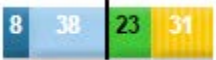
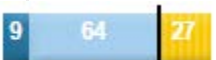



Elementary School A - Math

2015 SBAC Math	2016 SBAC Math
	3 rd Grade: 100% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 100% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 100% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 78% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 75% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 67% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 50% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 50% Proficient 	









Elementary School A - ELA

2015 SBAC ELA	2016 SBAC ELA
	3 rd Grade: 75% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 100% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 100% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 67% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 63% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 89% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 88 % Proficient 
6 th Grade: 67% Proficient 	

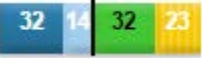

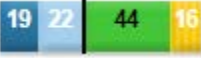

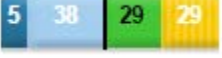



Elementary School B - Math

2015 SBAC Math	2016 SBAC Math
	3 rd Grade: 89% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 93% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 85% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 54% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 27% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 65% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 89% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 85% Proficient 	








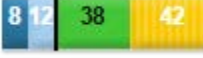
Elementary School B - ELA

2015 SBAC ELA	2016 SBAC ELA
	3 rd Grade: 100% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 93% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 69% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 69% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 64% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 90% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 94% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 92% Proficient 	


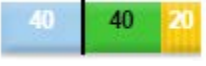





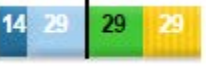
Elementary School C - Math

2015 SBAC Math	2016 SBAC Math
	3 rd Grade: 55% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 63% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 59% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 78% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 57% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 82% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 76% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 67% Proficient 	









Elementary School C - ELA

2015 SBAC ELA	2016 SBAC ELA
	3 rd Grade: 64% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 66% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 63% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 78% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 86% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 76% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 79% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 81% Proficient 	

Elementary School D- Math

2015 SBAC Math	2016 SBAC Math
	3 rd Grade: 86% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 60% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 33% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 60% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 50% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 75% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 50% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 57% Proficient 	

Elementary School D - ELA

2015 SBAC ELA	2016 SBAC ELA
	3 rd Grade: 71% Proficient 
3 rd Grade: 40% Proficient 	4 th Grade: 33% Proficient 
4 th Grade: 80% Proficient 	5 th Grade: 100% Proficient 
5 th Grade: 75% Proficient 	6 th Grade: 75% Proficient 
6 th Grade: 86% Proficient 	

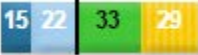

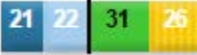

Elementary School E - Math

2016 SBAC Math	
3 rd Grade: 44% Proficient	
4 th Grade: 38% Proficient	
5 th Grade: 67% Proficient	
6 th Grade: 73% Proficient	





Elementary School E - ELA

2016 SBAC ELA	
3 rd Grade: 78% Proficient	
4 th Grade: 38% Proficient	
5 th Grade: 50% Proficient	
6 th Grade: 80% Proficient	



WUMS - Math

2015 SBAC Math	2016 SBAC Math
	 7 th Grade: 62% Proficient (85)
 7 th Grade: 62% Proficient (69)	 8 th Grade: 57% Proficient (72)
 8 th Grade: 47% Proficient (74)	



WUMS - ELA

2015 SBAC ELA	2016 SBAC ELA
	 7 th Grade: 75% Proficient (85)
 7 th Grade: 72% Proficient (69)	 8 th Grade: 79% Proficient (72)
 8 th Grade: 74% Proficient (74)	

WUHS - Math

2015 SBAC Math	2016 SBAC Math
	
	11 th Grade: 45% Proficient (78)
11 th Grade: 45% Proficient (103)	

WUHS - ELA

2015 SBAC ELA	2016 SBAC ELA
	
	11 th Grade: 68% Proficient (80)
	
11 th Grade: 62% Proficient (102)	

(Figure 4)

**Vermont Smarter Balanced Testing Results 2016
Top Ten/Twenty Schools Testing Results**

	English ALL Top 10	English ALL Top 20	English FRL Top 10	English FRL Top 20	Math ALL Top 10	Math ALL Top 20	Math FRL Top 10	Math FRL Top 20
Grade								
3	83-96%	77-96%	58-82%	47-82%	81-92%	79-92%	59-80%	50-80%
4	80-89%	75-89%	48-85%	42-85%	81-90%	75-90%	53-85%	38-85%
5	84-96%	78-96%	63-79%	50-79%	73-85%	64-85%	44-72%	36-72%
6	80-94%	75-94%	50-83%	42-83%	73-89%	63-89%	36-46%	25-46%
7	77-94%	73-94%	54-73%	47-73%	67-85%	62-85%	40-64%	31-64%
8	80-94%	77-94%	55-79%	47-73%	68-82%	63-82%	37-64%	33-64%
11	71-82%		54-85%		48-67%		28-44%	

(Figure 5)

Note:

Chart shows the percentage of students who scored proficient or above of the ten (and twenty) highest scoring public schools in Vermont for all students and for lower income students (FRL = Free or Reduced Lunch)

APPENDIX 2: PROGRAM OPPORTUNITY

Analysis to Achieve Full Access to Current Program Opportunities in Windsor Central:

Standards of Program Opportunities for WCSU based on the highest current level of existing programs

- Art = 2x per week at 45 – 60 minutes
- Music = 2x per week for 60 minutes
- Physical Education = 2 x per week for 45 – 60 minutes
- World Languages = 2 x per week for 45 minutes
- Library/Media Sciences = 2 x per week for 45 – 60 minutes

Standards of Operational Opportunities for WCSU based on the highest current level of existing programs

- Full Time Principal in each school
- Full Time Director of Curriculum/Assessment/STEM (current shared position for Superintendent)
- Increased health service professionals in building for a minimum of two times per week
- Access to academic summer programming (KES model)

IMPLEMENTATION OF EQUITY STANDARDS IN EXISTING STRUCTURES

Central Office:

Full Time Director of Curriculum/Assessment/STEM

Individual Campuses:

1. Barnard Academy

+ Full Time Principal

+ Art – additional 45 min class for each student

+ PE – additional 30 min class for each student

+ World Languages – additional 40 min class for each student

+ STEM

+Late Bus

2. Killington Elementary School

+ Art – additional 45 min class for each student

+ World Languages – additional 40 min class for each student

+ Music – additional 15 minutes per week for each student

+ Library/Media – additional 45 min class for each student

+ STEM

3. Reading Elementary School

+ Full Time Principal

- + Art – additional 45 min class for each student
- + PE – additional 30 min class for each student
- + World Languages – additional 15 min class for each student
- + Library/Media – one 45 min classes for each student
- + STEM
- + Late Bus

4. The Prosper Valley School

- + Library/Media – additional 45 min class for each student
- + STEM
- + Late Bus

5. Woodstock Elementary School

- + Art – additional 45 min class for each student
- + PE – additional 10 minutes per student
- + World Languages – additional 10 min class for each student
- + Music – additional 20 minutes per week for each student
- + Library/Media – additional 20 min class for each student (includes STEM)

TOTAL COST TO ACHIEVE EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE CURRENT STATE: \$648,768

Note: to achieve equity represents an increase of 9.3 cents on the current homestead tax rate for every community/district in the supervisory union.

Note: Cost figures were based on current FY'17 budget figures. Enrollment/Staffing figures based on current enrollments and staffing.

Note: \$70,000 = 1 cent on the tax rate for a unified district.

Cost Analysis

School Based:

Additional Allied Arts Teachers: (Art, Music, PE, World Languages, Library Media, Health Services)	\$253,332
Principal (Full time principal between Barnard and Reading)	\$51,701
Health Service Professional	\$49,620
Total Salaries:	\$354,643
Total Benefits:	<u>\$124,125</u>
School-Based Total Cost:	\$478,768

District-Wide:

Director of Curriculum and Instruction (with benefits)	\$110,000
Late Bus	\$20,000
Summer Program Expansion	\$40,000
District-Wide Total Cost:	\$170,000

Total Cost to Achieve Equity of Opportunity = \$648,768 or 9.3 cents increase on the current (FY'17) Homestead Tax rate

Notes:

- Cost, enrollment, and staffing projections are based on current FY'17 budget figures and existing enrollment and staffing data.*
- The projected increase of 9.3 cents is on the **current homestead tax rate** for every community/district in the supervisory union **not the local rate** which varies based on the CLA for each community in the supervisory union.*

APPENDIX 3: Restructuring Model 2

Restructuring Model 2: Create two primary schools (PK-2) at Barnard and Reading

Barnard and Reading Primary Schools (PreK-2)

This proposal explores the educational and financial impact of creating primary schools (PK-2) at both Barnard and Reading elementary schools. Grades 3-6 at Barnard were assumed to attend Prosper Valley elementary school, and Reading grades 3-6, The Woodstock Elementary School. Both schools have the capacity, both in space and staffing, to educate these students without adding additional staff (except at one grade level a Woodstock which would need an addition .75 FTE elementary teacher).

	PreK	K	1	2	Art	Music	PE	Language	Media	Consl	Nurse
Barnard	11	10	8	8	.2	.3	.2	.2	.4	.2	.15
	1 FTE (multi-age)		1 FTE (multi-age)		Keep Current Staffing in specials + decrease .8 Teaching Principal to .5 FTE.						
Reading	13	9	7	7	.2	.2	.2	.1	0	.4	0
	1 FTE (multi-age)		1 FTE (multi-age)		Keep Current Staffing in specials + decrease .6 Teaching Principal to .5 FTE.						

Notes:

- Each school would be assigned one regular education paraprofessional to assist the PreK/K multi-age classroom.
- One full time primary school principal would be shared between both campuses.

Projected Class Sizes at TPVS and Woodstock (Current Enrollment):

	3	4	5	6
Prosper Valley	21	17	22	20
	1 FTE	1 FTE	1 FTE	1 FTE
Woodstock	31	29	37	25
	2 FTE	2 FTE	2 FTE	2 FTE

Model 2 - Cost Projections:

Addition of a ¾ FTE core teacher at Woodstock Elementary: \$65,000

Note: Additional staffing needed to address increases in 3-6 at Woodstock

Additional Transportation: \$50,000

Note: There may be additional transportation costs in bussing 3-6 graders. This cost represents an additional bus run added to the current transportation plan.

Budget Savings due to Restructuring Elementary Programs **\$504,971**

Instructional Savings at Barnard Due to Staff Reductions \$298,757

Instructional Savings at Reading Due to Staff Reductions \$206,214

Net Savings of Model #2 = ~\$400,000

Note: Cost, enrollment, and staffing projections are based on current FY'17 budget figures and existing enrollment and staffing data.

APPENDIX 4: ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING PATTERNS

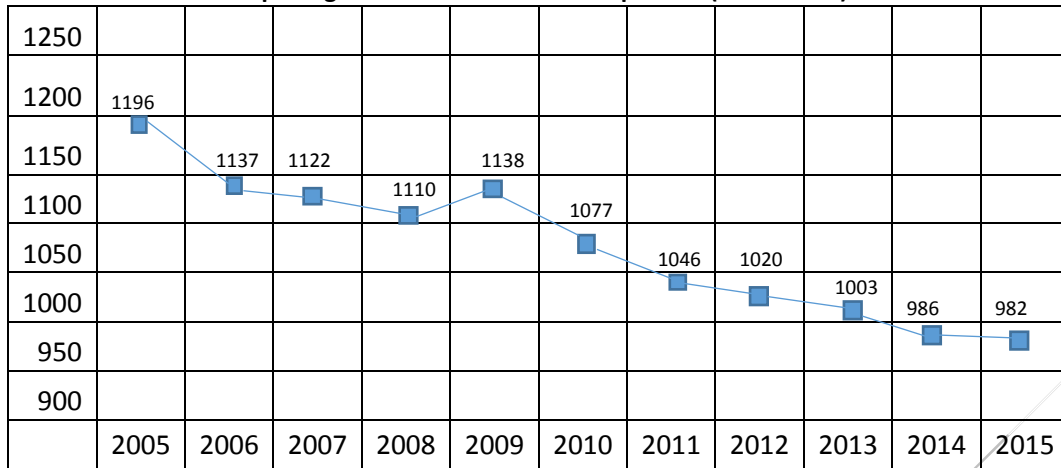
Windsor Central Supervisory Union										
Enrollment Report Opening Day August 26, 2015										
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	TUITION
Barnard	15	10	11	9	9	5	8	8	75	3
Prosper Valley- Bridgewater	0	2	3	4	2	7	5	7	30	3
Prosper Valley- Pomfret	0	5	6	9	8	8	6	8	50	1
Reading	12	9	5	9	7	3	4	4	53	3
Killington	0	14	13	12	9	13	11	18	90	37
Woodstock	0	19	17	21	23	34	20	34	168	10
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	27	59	55	64	58	70	54	79	466	57
DISTRICT STUDENTS AT WUHSMS:										
TOWN	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total Secondary	Total K-12		
Barnard	11	5	7	7	9	9	48	120		
Bridgewater	7	3	9	5	12	9	45	72		
Killington	5	8	8	4	11	8	44	97		
Pomfret	12	8	8	9	11	12	60	109		
Reading	7	7	2	5	7	6	34	84		
Woodstock	32	24	27	33	24	33	173	331		
	74	55	61	63	74	77	404	813		
	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL	TUITION		
Woodstock Union Middle School	87	73					160	31		
Woodstock Union High School			75	83	95	98	351	76		
SUBTOTAL SECONDARY	87	73	75	0	95	98	511	107		
School Choice			0	1	1	3	5			
Foreign Exchange			0	0	0	0	0			
TOTAL SECONDARY	87	73	75	84	96	101	516			
	MS	160			HS	356				
WCSU DISTRICT TOTAL:						982			Tuition Total	164

Windsor Central: Elementary Enrollment and Student Teacher Staffing Ratios 2016-2017

Town	PreK	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Barnard	15 (2 educators) (12/1 ratio)	10	11 (1 educator) (20/1 ratio)	9	9 (1 educator) (13/1 ratio)	5	8 (1 educator) (16/1 ratio)	8
Killington	0	14	13	12	9	13	11	18
Prosper Valley	0	7	9	13	10	15	11	15
Reading	12	9	5 (1 educator) (14/1 ratio)	9	7 (1 educator) (10/1 ratio)	3	4 (1 educator) (8/1 ratio)	4
Woodstock	0	19	17 (2 educators) (8.5/1 ratio)	21 (2 educators) (10.5/1 ratio)	23 (2 educators) (11.5/1 ratio)	34 (2 educators) (17/1 ratio)	20 (4 educators) (13.5/1 ratio)	34

Ledger: Non-Shaded = Single Grade/Single Teacher Classrooms Shaded = Multi-Grade Classrooms Lined = Multi-Grade Teacher Team

WCSU Opening Enrollment: 10-Year Comparison (Pre-K to 12)



APPENDIX 5: STATEMENT OF VALUES

Property Description	Assets/School Values								
	Ownership	Year Built	Sq Foot	Bldg	Business Personal Property	Site Improvements	Books & Valuable Papers	Auto Physical Damage	Grand Total
Barnard Academy	School District	1991	12,524	\$2,128,400	\$170,300	\$123,100	\$25,000	\$-	\$2,446,800
The Prosper Valley School	School District	1991	18,037	\$3,056,300	\$335,100	\$85,700	\$25,000	\$-	\$3,502,100
Reading Elementary	School District	1995	13,341	\$2,265,300	\$181,200	\$39,700	\$25,000	\$-	\$2,511,200
Killington Elementary	School District	1995	30,735	\$5,581,800	\$502,400	\$127,300	\$25,000	\$-	\$6,236,500
Woodstock Elementary	Town of Woodstock		57,282	\$10,273,100	\$925,000	\$101,900	\$25,000	\$-	\$11,325,000
Windsor Central SU	Woodstock Union Jr/Sr HS District 4	2003	4,322	\$638,300	\$400,000	\$-	\$25,000	\$-	\$1,063,300
Woodstock Union JR/SR HS	Woodstock Union Jr/Sr HS District 4	1958	143,891	\$25,454,100	\$2,151,000	\$148,200	\$100,000	\$58,000	\$27,911,300
Union Arena	Woodstock Union Jr/Sr HS District 4		29,576	\$4,258,300	\$100,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,358,300
Greenhouse	Woodstock Union Jr/Sr HS District 4			\$-	\$10,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$10,000
Garage	Woodstock Union Jr/Sr HS District 4		2,905	\$344,600	\$30,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$374,600
Maintenance Building	Woodstock Union Jr/Sr HS District 4			\$250,000					\$250,000
Grand Total				\$54,250,200	\$4,805,000	\$625,900	\$250,000	\$58,000	\$59,989,100

Statement of Long-Term Debt

	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING 6/30/16	ANNUAL PRINCIPAL PAYMENT	PAY OFF DATE	ESTIMATED BALANCE 7/1/18
BARNARD ACADEMY	-			
THE PROSPER VALLEY SCHOOL	-			
READING ELEMENTARY	-			
KILLINGTON ELEMENTARY	-			
WOODSTOCK ELEMENTARY	70,000	70,000	DECEMBER 1, 2016	-
WINDSOR CENTRAL SU	-			
WOODSTOCK UNION JR/SR HS #4	733,333	66,667	NOVEMBER 15, 2026	666,667
GRAND TOTAL	803,333	136,667		666,667

APPENDIX 6: BOARD REPRESENTATION

2010 CENSUS INFORMATION:

Barnard	947	13% (12%)
Bridgewater	936	13% (12%)
Killington	811	11% (10%)
Pomfret	904	12% (11%)
Reading	666	09% (08%)
Woodstock	3048	42% (38%)
 Total:	 7312	

SIXTEEN (16) MEMBER PROPORTIONAL BOARD:

Barnard	2	13%
Bridgewater	2	13%
Killington	2	13%
Pomfret	2	13%
Reading	2	13%
Woodstock	6	38%
 Total	 16	

EIGHTEEN (18) MEMBER PROPORTIONAL BOARD:

Barnard	2	11%
Bridgewater	2	11%
Killington	2	11%
Pomfret	2	11%
Plymouth	2	11%
Reading	2	11%
Woodstock	6	33%
 Total	 188	

Note:

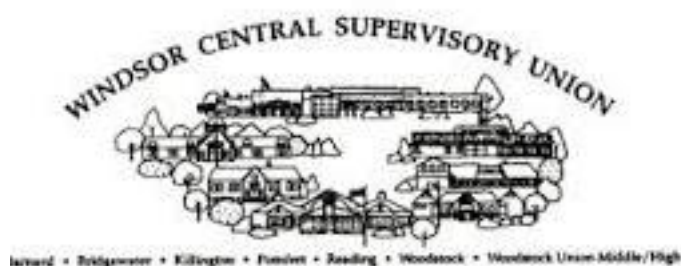
Plymouth = 619 (08%)

Total with Plymouth = 7931

Total Board Size w/Plymouth = 18

18-member board % in parentheses

APPENDIX 7: EXPLORATORY PHASE DOCUMENTS



Educational Opportunities and Challenges – Windsor Central Act 46 Study Committee April 25, 2016 – Final Draft

Opportunities:

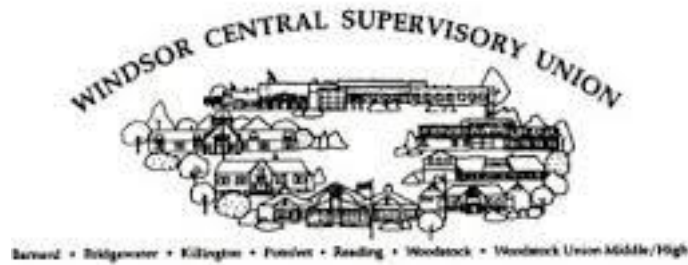
- 1. Curriculum Enrichment:** Are there opportunities to create richer, more individualized, curriculum opportunities for our students by leveraging the scale we get as a district? E.g., can we further customize learning for the learner's own pace and abilities?
- 2. Curricular and Instructional Equity:** Might a governance merger create greater opportunity to address the curricular and/or instructional inequities between among the elementary schools in the supervisory union. Would a merger make it easier to unify program and instructional expectations and insure greater accountability across the district?
- 3. Student outcomes:** Can a merged district meaningfully lead to improved student outcomes: e.g., can we demonstrate that we are world class in moving student achievement from point A to point B (regardless of their starting positions?) Can we both “raise the bar” and reduce the performance gap between and among students from different elementary schools before they come together at the middle/high school?
- 4. Leadership and Administration:** Would a new, more unified leadership structure lead to more efficient and effective patterns of school management and accountability? How? Why? What might be the potential impact on student learning of district-wide strategic planning and assessment, as well as, a PK-12 educational vision?
- 5. Culture and community:** Can we create a greater esprit de corps among the communities that make-up Windsor Central through broader student & teacher exchanges, sharing of best practices, and parent events? Would a merger bring a more unified sense of identity and community support across the district and lead to more vibrant PK-12 perspective and sense of community responsibility?
- 6. Talent development:** Can we create an employee value proposition within the district which attracts, retains and develops the best teachers and administrators? Would a merger lead to more effective patterns of professional development, more cohesive instructional policies,

standards, and procedures? Could hiring on a larger scale identify better candidates and better hires?

7. **Sharing Talent:** Would a governance merger create more opportunities to share existing personnel more effectively? Would a merger enable greater opportunities for mentoring and the sharing of best practice?
8. **Sustainability and Stability:** Would a merger better protect taxpayers from decreases in student enrollment or budgetary spikes? E.g. sharing of the risk of declining enrollment so that one school does not feel the "pain" quite as severely?
9. **Scale and Cost:** Can we maximize both instructional and administration efficiencies, while still delivering excellence? How? Would a merger enable us better address the negative trend lines currently affecting us in terms of underlying cost growth and student enrollment? Would a governance merger lead to significant cost savings that could be utilized to maintain favorable class sizes and innovative instructional programs?
10. **Community Enhancement:** Would a unified district contribute to the entire Supervisory district being recognized as an attractive place to live with a quality educational program available to all children?
11. **Inter-District School Choice:** As a merged district, would inter-district school choice among the district's elementary schools create greater opportunity and satisfaction for families and students? Would such a plan be attractive to new homebuyers in the area?

Challenges:

1. **Identity and Vision:** Would a merger undercut local patterns of school identity, parental involvement, cultural tradition, and best practice? How do we keep this from happening? How do we balance the creative tension between local and district-wide interests and aspirations?
2. **Budgetary Equity:** With one district-wide budget, how would a new governance structure insure a fair allocation of resources to meet the needs of all students across the district?



**Act 46 Exploratory Study Committee
Final Draft: February 3, 2016**

Essential Questions with Associated Follow-up/Clarification Questions

Introduction:

Act 46 is designed to encourage local school districts and supervisory unions to explore the potential benefits of consolidating their existing school boards into a single, unified district responsible for serving, in this case, every student in the Windsor Central Supervisory Union. The intent of the bill is to restructure school governance throughout the state of Vermont in the interest of improving the quality at a more affordable cost.

It is the committee's expectation that any comprehensive study must seek to address the following questions fully, and as a result, be in a position to articulate clearly to parents, students, and community members, "What would change, and what would remain the same?" under any recommended change in governance.

I. Would unifying the current supervisory union into a single district led by a single school board, lead to better teaching practices and better student outcomes? Why?

- Are there any educational opportunities/enhancements might a unified district be in a position to explore and deliver that are not possible under existing governance structures?
- How might a unified district school board go about addressing any educational disparities/inequalities in the elementary programs should they be found to exist?
- What organizational and financial efficiencies might a unified district be in a position to explore and deliver that are not possible under existing governance structures? What organizational and financial inefficiencies might result?
- Would a unified PreK-12 district with a single governing school board be more focused upon and accountable for delivering better student results at every level? Why? How?

- To what extent, if any, do existing governance structures limit effective patterns of preK-12 planning, administration, accountability, and cost containment as required by Act 46?

II. What educational, organizational, and cultural challenges do we face moving to a single board? How might these challenges be addressed, if at all? How would this new board work in practice?

- Would the interests of “local” parents, students, community members, and taxpayers be protected in a unified district? (e.g. board composition/representation, parent councils, etc.)
- Would a unified district improve the relationship between the schools in the current SU and the communities they serve? Why? How?
- Would current instructional practice, educational opportunities, and local traditions be protected in any restructuring of district governance?
- Could a unified board be fully responsive to the individual interests and needs of each campus in the district?
- Could a unified board understand and respond to the needs of individual communities within the district?

III. What are the projected financial and organizational outcomes of moving to a single board?

- Could a unified district make education more affordable throughout the communities that make up our current S.U.? Could costs go up as a result of unification?
- What are the legal, contractual, liability, charter, and/or ownership issues that need to be addressed in any proposed merger?
- What are the projected financial obligations in deferred maintenance, health and building safety that need to be addressed in any merger?
- What is the impact on individual tax rates of creating a unified district? What happens to individual tax rates if districts choose not to merge?

**Act 46 Exploratory Study Committee – Windsor Central
Potential Priorities for Further Study of Financial/Organizational Benefits**

Draft 1: April 7, 2016

I. State Tax Incentives over 4/5 years; Merger Implementation Grants

II. Large Scale Purchasing/Contract Negotiation with Private Vendors

- ✓ Technology

- ✓ Books & Supplies
- ✓ Maintenance Needs

III. Shared Administrative, Staffing, and Service Delivery Models

- ✓ Coordinate Teaching/Staffing Assignments (Responding to changing school demographics, program, and building needs)
- ✓ Eliminate Administrative Redundancy
- ✓ Streamline Existing Service Models (Transportation, Maintenance)
- ✓ Coordinate Financial Administration/Reduce Bureaucracy
 - One audit Instead of seven
 - Fewer Board Stipends
 - Board Services/Support (Stenographer, Legal, Dues, etc.)
 - Purchasing Process
- ✓ Increase Efficiency in State and Federal Data Collection and Reporting
- ✓ Coordinate Use of Facilities

IV. Further Collaboration of Special Education and Behavioral Management Services

- ✓ Review of out-of-house vs in-house delivery models and opportunities
- ✓ Alternative Program Delivery

V. Asset Coordination

- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Buildings and Grounds
- ✓ Differed Maintenance
- ✓ Long-Term Capital Planning

Integrated Field Review Report

REPORT

December 7, 2016

Windsor Central Supervisory Union
Final Report
Site Visit: November 8 & 9, 2016

Submitted by Josh Souliere & Jesse Roy



Schools & Enrollment

School	Approximate Enrollment	Grade Span
Barnard Academy	76	PK-6
Killington Elementary	92	PK-6
The Prosper Valley School	90	K-6
Reading Elementary	54	PK-6
Woodstock Elementary	171	K-6
Woodstock Union Middle / High School	506	7-12

Windsor Central Supervisory Union (WCSU) Superintendent Alice Worth volunteered to participate in the Vermont Agency of Education's Integrated Field Review (IFR) pilot. WCSU's site visit was conducted in the pilot's second year.

The morning of day one the Visiting Team reviewed artifacts provided by WCSU. During the afternoon of day one and the morning of day two, the Visiting Team participated in interviews involving the Superintendent, Business Manager, human resources staff, counseling staff, Director of Special Education, intervention staff, teaching staff, students, parents, and administrators. In addition, the Review Team observed classroom instruction and WCSU learning environments through classroom observations and facilities tours led by students or school staff.

The Review Team gathered data regarding the implementation of Education Quality Standards in the school system related to academic proficiency, personalization, safe healthy schools, high quality staffing, and financial efficiencies.

Visiting Team

Name	Role	Organization
Josh Souliere	Assistant Director of EQR	Agency of Education
Lori Dolezal	Quality Assurance Manager	Agency of Education
Donna Stafford	Quality Assurance Manager	Agency of Education
Tracy Watterson	MTSS Program Manager	Agency of Education
Linda McSweeney	ROPA Consultant	Agency of Education
Jesse Roy	Education Quality Coordinator	Agency of Education
Veronica Newton	Personalization and Flexible Pathways Program Coordinator	Agency of Education
Robin Pembroke	Business Manager	Orange Southwest SU
Elijah Hawkes	High School Principal	Orange Southwest SU
Susan McKelvie	Elementary Principal	Orange Southwest SU
Jim Poindexter	RTCC English Teacher	Orange Southwest SU
Ken Cadow	Career and Workforce Director	Orange Southwest SU
Kathryn Fredericks	Elementary Literacy Coach	Orange Southwest SU
Crystal Larocque	Mathematics Coach/Data Specialist	Orange Southwest SU
Pat Cushing	Fine Arts Department Chair	Orange Southwest SU
Christy Coloutti	Elementary Principal	Rutland Central SU
Erin Hanrahan	Middle School Teacher	Rutland Central SU
Beth Mitchell	Special Educator	Rutland Central SU
Bernie Peatman	Director of CIA and Technology	Rutland Southwest SU
Janet Chandler	HS Global Studies Teacher	Rutland Southwest SU
Joan Paustian	Superintendent	Rutland Southwest SU

Academic Proficiency

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize a coordinated curriculum in all subjects for each Supervisory Union/District that is aligned to the standards adopted by the State, instruction in all subjects and the transferable skills, a local assessment system for determining student achievement, multi-tiered systems of support for learners in meeting those standards and participation in the State assessment system.

Findings:

Curriculum Coordination

1. WCSU teachers report collaborative efforts between schools toward developing coordinated units of study in ELA, Math and NGSS.
2. WCSU teachers report having strong input into the development and coordination of curriculum within their respective schools.
3. Students and administrators report that readiness to access the middle school curriculum is partially dependent on which elementary school a student has attended.

Local Assessment System

1. There is evidence of a coordinated assessment system across the SU and evidence indicates all schools are using the assessment data to inform instruction.
2. WCSU teachers are working with a Mathematics Coach to develop a Primary Math Assessment, increasing alignment with the Common Core State Standards.

Instructional Strategies

1. WCSU employs ELA and Math instructional coaches to provide embedded professional learning.
2. Staff, students and administrators report varying degrees of differentiated instructional practices, as well as technology integration, between schools.

Proficiency-Based Learning

1. Virtually all stakeholders report confusion about the implementation and rationale behind proficiency-based assessment and reporting, across WCSU.
2. Some students and staff at the high school report that a move to a proficiency-based learning model has the potential for opportunities to integrate curriculum and to clarify learning objectives.

Commendations

1. WCSU is committed to the continued improvement and coordination of curriculum, instruction and assessment.
2. WCSU teachers have a strong voice in the development of the SU-wide curriculum, to the benefit of the collective learning community.

Recommendations

1. WCSU should continue to develop, coordinate and communicate efforts to implement proficiency-based learning practices.
2. WCSU should continue to focus on improving their SU-wide data collection and analysis in order to more effectively inform policy and practice.

Personalization

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize development of personalization through the creation and use of Personalized Learning Plans, flexible pathways to graduation, Career and Technical Education and instructional strategies that personalize learning for students.

Findings:

Personalized Learning Plans

1. WCSU ninth graders are piloting a Personalized Learning Plan and proficiency-based reporting system, and administrators have identified a plan for implementation across middle and high school.
2. Students in elementary schools do not have Personalized Learning Plans, yet there are some opportunities to personalize their learning.

Flexible Pathways/CTE

1. WCSU students at all grade levels have learning enrichment opportunities through community resources, including internship programs, community centers, museums, the National Parks Service and through virtual classrooms.
2. High school students can explore a career or college interest through a Senior Concentration, supervised work experiences, technical center, early college and dual enrollment programs.

Full Breadth of Courses

1. WCSU schools maximize those resources available to them through the community, endowments and surrounding natural areas to provide unique and varied opportunities for learning.
2. WCSU offers students a variety of expanded learning opportunities beyond the school day, including afterschool programs, summer programs and class trips.

Student Choice/Voice

1. Some WCSU students engage in cooperative learning, peer mentoring, peer mediation and team building activities.
2. High school students take part in a daily FLEX block, where they receive academic support, attend a club or take part in an elective activity.

Commendations

1. WCSU has a wealth of community resources and community support and takes advantage of these assets to maximize learning opportunities for students.
2. WCSU utilizes physical spaces in schools and communities to exhibit student breadth of learning in a variety of ways.

Recommendations

1. WCSU should develop a consistent communication channel with stakeholders to promote the understanding of initiatives such as Personalized Learning Plans and proficiency-based education.
2. Aligned with WCSU's Principle of Cohesiveness, efforts should be made to ensure that all students have opportunities to demonstrate learning in personalized ways.

Safe Healthy Schools

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the establishment of learning environments that promote the social and physical health of students, facilities that promote learning and security, support for preventing disciplinary infractions and responding appropriately when transgressions occur and engaging in inter-agency work to support students beyond the school day.

Findings:

MTSS

1. Understanding and implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Support frameworks for academic and behavior is inconsistent across WCSU schools.
2. Some evidence suggests that schools across WCSU do not have equitable access to academic and behavior support personnel.

Social/ Emotional Health

1. WCSU staff demonstrate a commitment to respecting and supporting all students.
2. Most WCSU students, staff and parents feel safe, happy and welcome at their school.

Physical Well Being

1. Some WCSU schools do not meet Vermont Education Quality Standards requirements for providing adequate physical education or health services and health curriculum to students.
2. Most WCSU schools provide opportunities for children to engage in various physical activities both during and after the school day.
3. School lunch offerings vary across WCSU, from no lunch option offered to a Farm-to-School program.

Physical Environment

1. Per observations and interviews, some WCSU buildings are in need of maintenance and repairs.
2. Some WCSU schools have a lack of storage space for supplies.
3. Some WCSU schools have outdoor learning spaces and equipment for physical and academic activities.

Commendations

1. There is a strong sense of community between students, staff and parents at WCSU schools.
2. WCSU provides an extensive number of experiential learning opportunities within and beyond the school day.

Recommendations

1. All WCSU schools need to meet the Vermont Education Quality Standards requirements for physical education and health services and learning opportunities.
2. WCSU should work to ensure that each school implements and understands the Multi-Tiered System of Supports frameworks for academics and behavior consistently.

High Quality Staffing

The Vermont Education Quality Standards prioritize the role of all school leaders in improving student learning and establish the expectation that school leaders will have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities in order to focus on improving student learning by ensuring that professional staff are appropriately licensed, a system of appropriate needs-based professional learning is available and aligned with staff evaluation and supervision policies, continuous improvement.

Findings:

Professional Development

1. Math and Literacy coaches provide embedded professional development across WCSU.
2. Some teachers report that SU level professional learning is not adequately differentiated, though teacher-initiated professional development is supported.
3. The WCSU administrative leadership team holds monthly, day-long retreats to coordinate work.

Staff Evaluation

1. Teachers reported inconsistencies in the use of the teacher evaluation process.
2. The principal supervision and evaluation process is aligned with the Vermont Core Teacher and Leader Standards.
3. Staff supervision plans in WCSU offer differing levels of support depending upon teacher experience within their area of endorsement.

Leadership

1. WCSU is focused on training principals as instructional leaders.
2. WCSU develops and maintains Action Plans for SU implemented programs, all of which are public and available on the SU website.
3. Parents and staff report concerns around equity between schools in the SU.

Staffing

1. Most WCSU teachers use differentiation, questioning techniques, strategies for student engagement, established routines, best practice learning strategies, visual supports and the pre-teaching of expectations.
2. Most WCSU parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of teaching and support for all students.

Commendations

1. WCSU provides cohesive professional development for ELA and Math, as well as opportunities for teacher-initiated professional learning.
2. WCSU teachers exercise a range of instructional strategies to support high levels of achievement for all students.

Recommendations

1. WCSU would benefit from engaging in community and school conversations regarding perceived inequities and biases.
2. WCSU should provide professional development on Personalized Learning Plans and Proficiency-Based Learning, as well as increase communication with parents around these initiatives.



Financial Efficiencies and Statutory Regulation

The Vermont Education Quality Standards require that Supervisory Unions carry out their work in accordance with the fundamentals of accounting procedures, provide the full range and breadth of resources, and facilities to support student learning while doing so at a funding level supported by the local community and conduct the business of schooling in accordance with laws that govern education.

Findings:

Budget/Decision Making

1. Some WCSU schools use local, private maintenance services to prioritize and address building needs.
2. Technical Needs Assessments are used to determine school technology needs, though variation in resource allocation persists.
3. Some WCSU schools raise and/or accept community funds in addition to those levied by taxes in order to support school activities and the acquisition of instructional materials.

Instructional Materials

1. Students report that different WCSU elementary schools have different academic resources, such as STEM labs or outdoor learning spaces.
2. School budgets indicate yearly building spending on books, supplies and technology.

Reporting

1. Cost per pupil varies across WCSU schools.
2. WCSU has established, articulated policies and procedures for the use of Medicaid and federal grant funds.
3. Some schools reported not having adequate technology resources.

Staffing Ratios

1. Observed teacher-student ratios varied within and across elementary schools from 1:18 to 1:4.
2. Most WCSU schools now receive library media specialist services, increased from previous years.
3. Reports show inequities in the availability of technicians and technology integrationists across WCSU.

Commendations

1. Equity and cohesiveness are stated and acted upon priorities of WCSU.
2. In 2015-2016, most WCSU schools had access to a library media specialist; in 2016-1017, most schools met this standard a plan is in place for all schools to meet the standard.

Recommendations

1. To further address equity and cohesiveness, and to promote transparency and sustainability, WCSU should evaluate and report the amount and impact of outside funding used to support each school.
2. WCSU should work to equalize access to technology integrationists for staff and students.

APPENDIX 9: COMMITTEE MEETINGS/PUBLIC FORUMS

ACT 46 TASK FORCE MEETINGS:

JUNE 25, 2015
JULY 13, 2015
JULY 23, 2015
OCTOBER 5, 2015

ACT 46 COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

OCTOBER 19, 2015
NOVEMBER 9, 2015
DECEMBER 14, 2015
JANUARY 6, 2016
JANUARY 18, 2016
FEBRUARY 3, 2016
FEBRUARY 22, 2016
MARCH 10, 2016
MARCH 23, 2016
APRIL 7, 2016
APRIL 27, 2016
MAY 23, 2016
JUNE 2, 2016
JUNE 23, 2016
JULY 13, 2016
JULY 27, 2016
AUGUST 10, 2016
AUGUST 31, 2016
SEPTEMBER 28, 2016
OCTOBER 13, 2016
NOVEMBER 3, 2016
NOVEMBER 17, 2016
NOVEMBER 30, 2016
DECEMBER 11, 2016

DECEMBER 20, 2016
JANUARY 4, 2017
JANUARY 18, 2017

ACT 46 COMMUNITY FORUMS:

MAY 10, 2016- WUHSMS TEAGLE LIBRARY
FOR ALL TOWNS
JUNE 1, 2016- KILLINGTON
JULY 18, 2016- BARNARD
AUGUST 3, 2016- READING—BOARD RUN,
NOT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 11, 2016- BRIDGEWATER
OCTOBER 20, 2016- POMFRET
OCTOBER 24, 2016- KILLINGTON
OCTOBER 26, 2016- BARNARD
NOVEMBER 9, 2016- WOODSTOCK
NOVEMBER 15, 2016- READING
DECEMBER 6, 2016 - BRIDGEWATER
DECEMBER 19, 2016- BARNARD
JANUARY 30, 2017 - BARNARD
FEBRUARY 27, 2017 – KILLINGTON
(SCHEDULED)

OTHER:

SEPTEMBER 6, 2016- ACT 46 FINANCE SUB-
COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 12, 2016- PRESENTATION TO
THE FULL WCSU BOARD.

NOVEMBER 9, 2015- ACT 46 WEBINAR

APPENDIX 10: SAMPLE WARNING

WARNING FOR ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The legal voters of the Bridgewater School District of Windsor County, Vermont, are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Bridgewater School, located in Bridgewater, Vermont, in said district, on Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at 9:00 A.M. for the purpose of transacting business not involving voting by Australian ballot.

The legal voters of the Bridgewater School District of Windsor County, Vermont, are hereby further warned and notified to meet at the Bridgewater Town Office on Tuesday, March 7, 2017, convening at 7:00 A.M. at which time the polls will open and continuing until 7:00 P.M. at which time the polls will close, for the purpose of transacting during that time voting by Australian ballot.

ARTICLE 1: To elect a moderator for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 2: To accept the reports of the Bridgewater School Directors for the school accounts and take action thereon.

ARTICLE 3: To elect one School Director to the Bridgewater School Board for a term of three years.

ARTICLE 4: To elect one School Director to the Woodstock Union High School District #4 for a term of three years.

ARTICLE 5: Shall the voters of the Bridgewater School District approve the Prosper Valley Joint Board to expend _____ dollars (\$_____) which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the support of the Prosper Valley Joint District School for the year beginning July 1, 2017? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$_____ per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is ____% higher/lower than spending for the current year. It is estimated on the basis of current information that the Bridgewater Village School District assessment will be _____ dollars (\$_____) and that the Pomfret School District assessment will be _____ dollars (\$_____) of the total Joint School budget.

(NOTE: This Article must be voted from the floor without amendment, by paper ballot, pursuant to the Prosper Valley Joint School Board Agreement.)

ARTICLE 6: To authorize the School Directors to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.

ARTICLE 7: To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

ARTICLES TO BE VOTED BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT

ARTICLE 8: Shall the voters of the Bridgewater School District vote to form the Windsor Central Unified Union School District (“New Unified District”) on the following terms:

1. A.) The Town School Districts of Barnard, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Plymouth, Reading, Killington and Woodstock (hereinafter referred to as the “Town School Districts”) are advisable districts for the establishment of the New Unified District.

B.) The Bridgewater and Pomfret Joint School shall also be considered advisable for the formation of the New Unified District but its interests are represented by the voters of the Bridgewater and Pomfret Town School Districts.

C.) The Woodstock Union High School District shall also be considered an advisable district for the formation of the New Unified District but its interests are represented by the voters of each of the Town School Districts (except Plymouth).

D.) If the New Unified District or a Modified Union District is created, then the Town School Districts that voted in favor of the merger and the Woodstock Union High School District shall be referred to herein as the “Forming Districts”.

2. If the voters of the six (6) Town School Districts that are currently members of the Woodstock Union High School District vote to approve the merger, the New Unified District will be established. If the voters of at least four (4), but not all, of the Town School Districts that are currently members of the Woodstock Union High School District vote to approve the merger, a modified unified union school district will be established to be known as the Windsor Central Modified Unified Union School District (“Modified Union District”).

3. The New Unified District or Modified Union District will operate grades Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12.

4. A.) If all town school districts vote to establish the New Unified District it shall be governed by a Board of Directors composed of eighteen (18) individuals elected by Australian ballot by the voters of the municipalities in which they reside. Each municipality within the New Unified District shall be guaranteed at least two resident representatives.

Based on the 2010 census, the new unified union board will consist of two (2) representatives residing in and representing Barnard; two (2) residing in and representing Bridgewater; two (2) residing in and representing Killington; two (2) residing in and representing Pomfret; two (2) residing in and representing Plymouth;

two (2) residing in and representing Reading; and six (6) residing in and representing Woodstock.

B.) If a Modified Unified Union School District is formed, any Pre-K-6 districts that are members of the Woodstock Union High School that vote NO will be referred to as Non-Member Elementary Districts (NMED). Board representation in the Modified Union District will be proportional as provided in sub-section 4. A above, including full proportional representation from each NMED. Board members from each NMED will have voting powers for all general Modified Union District actions, but will recuse themselves from consideration and voting upon programmatic, budgetary, personnel, or building matters of the Modified Union which correlate to grades operated by the NMED.

5. The New Unified District or Modified Union District shall assume all capital debt as may exist on June 30, 2018, including both principal and interest, of the Forming Districts that joined the new union district. It shall also assume any and all operating deficits, surpluses, and fund balances of the Forming Districts that may exist on the close of business on June 30, 2018. In addition, reserve funds, specific endowments or other restricted accounts, including student activity and related accounts, identified for specific purposes will be transferred to the New Unified District or Modified Union District, and will be applied for established purposes unless otherwise determined through appropriate legal procedures.

6. A.) No later than June 30, 2018, the town school districts that voted to join the new union district and the Woodstock Union High School District will convey to the New Unified District or Modified Union District, for the sum of one dollar, and subject to the encumbrances of record, all of their school-related real and personal property, including all land, buildings, and content.

B.) In the event that, and at such subsequent time as, the New Unified District or Modified Union District Board of Directors determines, in its discretion, that continued possession of the real property, including land and buildings, conveyed to it by one or more of the town school districts will not be used in direct delivery of student educational programs, the New Unified District or Modified Union District shall offer for sale such real property to the town in which such real property is located, for the sum of one dollar, subject to all encumbrances of record, the assumption or payment of all outstanding bonds and notes, and the repayment of any school construction aid or grants required by Vermont law, in addition to costs of capital improvements subsequent to July 1, 2018.

The conveyance of any of the above school properties shall be conditioned upon the town owning and using the real property for community and public purposes for a minimum of five years. In the event the town elects to sell the real property prior to five years of ownership, the town shall compensate the New Unified District or Modified Union District for all capital improvements and renovations completed after the formation of the New Unified District or Modified Union District prior to the sale

to the town. In the event a town elects not to acquire ownership of such real property, the New Unified District or Modified Union District shall, pursuant to Vermont statutes, sell the property upon such terms and conditions as established by the New Unified District or Modified Union District Board of School Directors.

7. The provisions of the Report and Formation Plan approved by the State Board of Education on _____, 2017, which is on file at the offices of the Windsor Central Supervisory Union shall govern the New Unified District.

ARTICLE 9: To elect one School Director to the Windsor Central Unified Union School Board for a term of one year, expiring March 2019.

ARTICLE 10: To elect one School Director to the Windsor Central Unified Union School Board for a term of three years, expiring March 2021.

Dated this ___th day of January, 2017.

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

Seth Shaw, Chair (*Signature*)

Justin Shipman
Joshua Gregg